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LINES TO A LADY.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

Lady, I've gazed on thee,
And thou art now a vision of the past,
A spirit-star, whose holy light is cast
On memory's voiceless sea.

That star—it lingers there
As beautiful as 'twere a dewy flower,
Soft-wafted down from Eden's glorious bower,
And floating in mid-air.

It is—that blessed one—
The day-star of my destiny—the first
I e'er could worship as the Persian erst
Worshiped his own loved Sun.

On all my years may lie
The shadow of the tempest, their dark flow
Be wild and drear, but that dear star will glow
Still beautiful on high.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1858, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

ROSALIND HUBERT;

OR,

THE HILLSIDE TRAGEDY.

A STORY OF SUNSHINE AND SHADOW IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR

CHAPTER I.

UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

It was a warm, balmy afternoon in the latter part of May, and the streets of Boston were teeming with busy life. Beneath the genial smiles of the spring-time sun the butterflies of Fashion spread their gaudy wings, and Washington street shone with as many gay colors as would satisfy the caprice of an Ethiop bride. The belles upon the side-walks, and the belles in carriages, smiled and nodded continually; and the head of that "dear creature," Fitznoodle, was kept bobbing like the pivoted caput of a wooden mandarin, as these little attentions came showering upon him. But there were others beside the smiling and nodding ones. There were long faces, and short ones; there were faces ruddy, and faces pale; and there were faces bent upon the pavement in eager, anxious thought. The face of Thomas Gondam was so bent, and his step was so hurried and nervous that many people wondered what ailed him as he jostled them in places where there was room enough.

From a small, dark office, away up among the many chambers of a dingy, brick building in Flag Alley, came Thomas Gondam. He closed his door and locked it, and put the key into his pocket, and then descended to the narrow alley. He seemed to come down as though he feared some one would hear him—gliding past doors almost upon tiptoe, and skipping over two steps at a time, as a hurried burglar would do. When he emerged into State street he cast a hurried glance about him, and then dodged across into the Post Office. There was a letter for him, and, creeping away into one corner, he opened it. It was very short, and produced a marked effect upon the reader. He clutched it as though it were a note of challenge from some mortal enemy; and when he put it into his pocket he did so with a thrust and a stamp, just as if he would summon the courage to meet that mortal enemy without flinching.

When Gondam left the Post Office he dodged back through Flag Alley into Dock square, thence, by the way of Union, to Hanover street; then Salem, and so on until he reached Prince street, where he resided. His house was a wooden one, fronting on a narrow court, and was so shut in that the sunlight scarcely ever entered it. He went straight to his own private room, where he had a desk with a few books upon it; an old case with a few older books in that, and four dingy walls half covered with township-plan maps.

Thomas Gondam was rather below the medium size, forty-five years of age, and not a bad-looking man at first sight; but there were marks upon his face which were against him. In the first place, the face was too colorless for its amount of flesh. It was not really pale, but had a look as though the blood that coursed next the skin was cold and senseless. And then about the corners of the light gray eyes there were many deep, long marks, like crow's-tracks, which gave a sinister expression to the upper features. In the street he might have passed for a priest, but not for a student; he might have passed for a clerk, but not for a merchant; and so he might have been taken for a broker, but never for a banker. And a broker he was, in fact. He professed to be a real-estate broker, and he may have done some business in that line; but most of his transactions were upon the "curb-stone," and in dark corners. He operated some upon his own hook, and also acted as a go-between for the bank-president, who did not wish it known that he took "two-per-cent a month," of the poor fellow who was obliged to borrow, and had to pay the usury. His net was not very large, but it was strong, and many fish were caught in it.

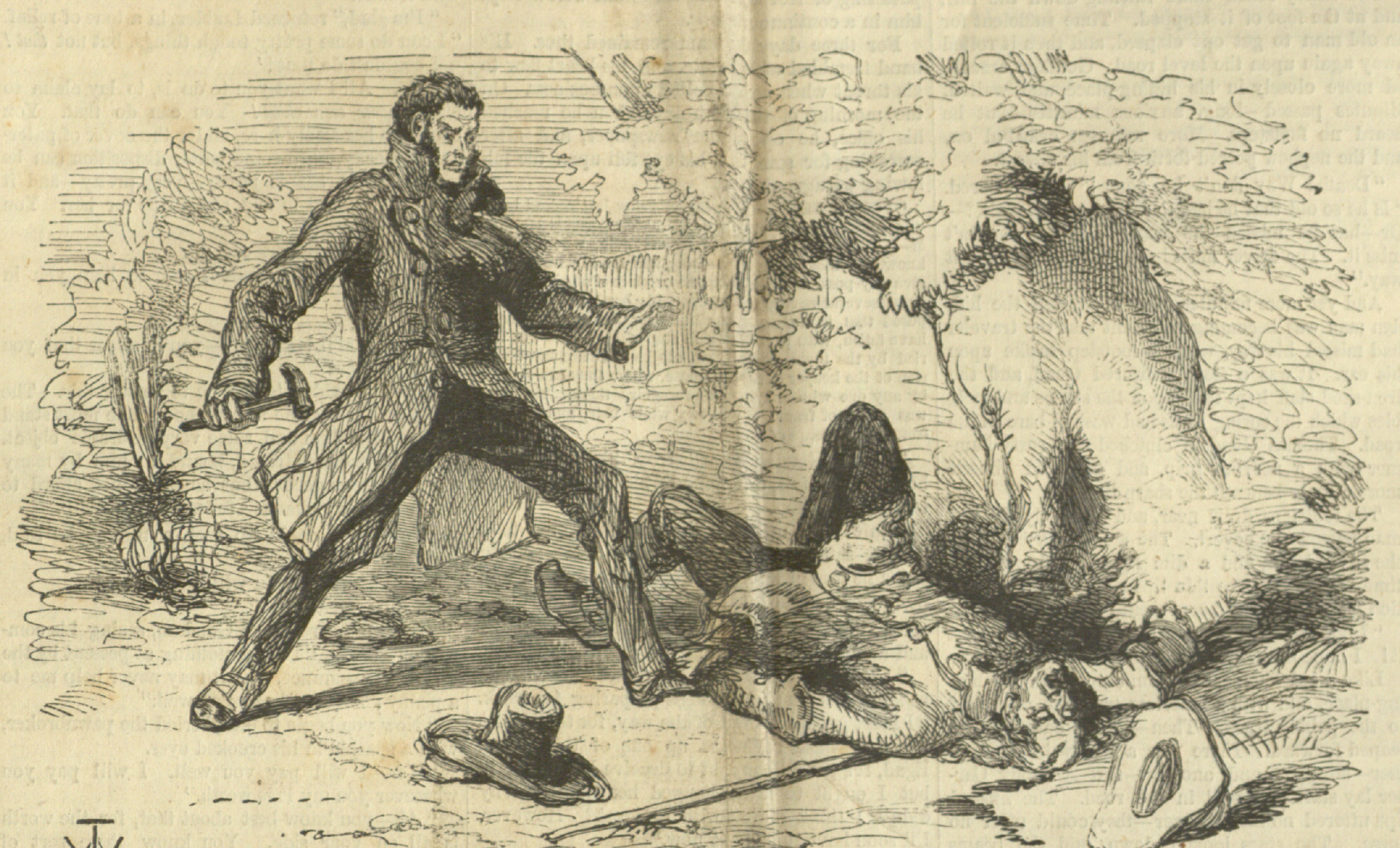
"He will be here to-night—perhaps within this hour," said Thomas Gondam, after he had read the letter again. "He writes with a steady hand for one so old—a very steady hand."

But Thomas Gondam's hand was not steady as he thrust the letter back into his pocket, though he managed, ere long, to appear quite calm. Presently there came a light rap upon the door, and the man said:

"Who's there?"

"It's me, Thomas," was the response, in a timorous voice.

"Then come in."


A.BOBBETT.SC.

THE "RUSTY HAMMER" HAS DONE ITS WORK.

And Mrs. Martha Gondam entered. She was a slim, pale woman, whose frame had been shaken by numerous fevers; and she seemed to stand in her husband's presence more like a slave than like a wife.

"I came up to see if uncle Anthony was coming," she ventured to remark, with her thin hands folded before her.

"Yes. He'll be here very soon, I expect; so you may wait supper until he comes."

With this Mr. Gondam turned to his desk, and his wife went away.

In less than half an hour Anthony Carper came. He was an old man, very near four-score, with white hair and wrinkled features, and with a dark, bronzed skin that contrasted strongly with his snowy locks. Notwithstanding his advanced age he was straight and firm, and moved with the ease of a younger man, though he could not bear fatigue as he once could. He was small of frame, and his dark eyes were bright and lively. Once Anthony Carper had a sister—an only sister—he never had any brother—and Thomas Gondam was that sister's child; and her only child, too; for her husband died early, and she followed him to the grave a few years after, leaving Thomas, then a boy of ten years, to the care of her brother Anthony.

And Anthony Carper had proved faithful to his trust as far as he was able. He had taken the orphan boy into his own family, and given him good schooling, and would have done more for him had not Thomas, when well-grown, preferred a place of his own seeking. The uncle might have seen more faults in his nephew had he been the child of any other than a loved sister; and even what faults he did see he might have checked more readily had they been open, palpable faults; but, being sly, insinuating, covert faults, it was difficult to approach them, especially as there was no lack of moral show upon the surface.

"My dear uncle," cried Thomas Gondam, grasping the old man by the hand, "how glad I am to see you. Why—you look younger than when you went away. Upon my word, you do."

"I'm glad of it, Thomas," the visitor returned, shaking his nephew's hand warmly. "I'm glad of it, my boy. I feel better than I did then, at all events."

"And I'm glad of that, too," Thomas said. "I'm glad to welcome you back to your native land. Let's see—you've been gone——"

"Sixteen years," finished Anthony.

"Just so. And you must find me changed, uncle."

"Why—yes, Thomas—you look older; and the ruddy glow has gone from your face; and those old marks about the eyes have grown longer and deeper. You must have tied yourself to business."

"I have, uncle."

"And I hope you have done well?"

"Yes—I have done well—very well—I am worth money. But I have not found such mines as you have found, uncle Anthony."

"No—I've been almost too fortunate—too fortunate for an old man like me."

A shade came over Anthony Carper's face as he spoke, for his thoughts had flown back to that time when a little circle of loved ones might have been made happy by the wealth he now possessed. But that time had been long gone—he had floated far, far down the stream since those gentle ones sank from sight.

"Say not so, dear uncle; for if your wealth gives you little joy, it gladdens our hearts to know that you will be able to live in peace and comfort for the rest of your life. But come—you must see my wife."

"And so you've got married since I went away?" said the old man, with a smile. "I thought you would live and die a confirmed bachelor."

"I confess that I did once think so myself," added Thomas, also smiling; "but I wanted a home. A man can't have a home without a wife, you know. But come, you shall see her. I think supper is ready. You won't find her as healthy-looking as some, for she's had much sickness; and then the loss of our children has worn upon her."

"Then you have lost children?" said the uncle, in a low tone.

"Yes—all—three of them."

"I lost mine—all—and wife, too—— But I know how to sympathize with you, Thomas."

The old man wiped a tear from his eye, and then added—

"But before we go out tell me of my little Rosalind. You know I haven't had a letter from you since I left China. Is she alive? is she well?"

"Yes," returned Thomas; but he spoke nervously, though his uncle did not notice it.

"Oh—thank God for that!" ejaculated Anthony Carper, fervently. "It is strange how my affections have clung to that girl, Thomas. Though she is only my grandchild, and though I have not seen her since I gave her into your hands sixteen years ago—and then she was but an infant—still I love her dearly. She is all that is left of my loved ones. Of my wife and children she is the only representative—the only living memento. Her poor mother was the only child of mine that lived to marry, and even she was cut down before her babe could lisp her name. Aye—in Rosalind all my love—my old home-love—is centered. You have spoken to her of her grandfather often, Thomas?"

"Oh, yes—certainly, uncle."

"And you have taught her to love me, Thomas?"

"Yes, of course I have."

Thomas Gondam answered these questions without hesitation; but there was a palpable nervousness in his manner while he did so. Yet the old man did not see it. He was too deeply engaged in his almost childish love for his orphaned grandchild.

"I hope she will love me well, Thomas," the grandfather pursued, "for I have built many castles upon that simple foundation. With Rosalind for my housekeeper I think I may be happy again. She is seventeen now."

"Yes, dear uncle."

"Is she like what her mother was?"

"Very much. But there is the tea-bell, uncle. Come—Martha will be anxious."

Uncle Anthony was duly introduced to the wife of his nephew, and the expression of pity which rested upon her plainly showed that she had his warmest sympathies. The meal passed off quite pleasantly; Martha doing all in her power to please her husband's uncle, and when they arose from the table, Thomas led the way to his own private room, up stairs.

"Now," said the old man, after his nephew had dusted a chair for him, "I must come to business, for I wish to be off as soon as possible."

"Off, uncle!" cried Thomas, in surprise.

"Yes—but only for a short time. I must see Rosalind to-night. You wrote me that she lived only four miles from the city."

"Only four," repeated the nephew, vacantly.

"And of course there must be some mode of conveyance."

"Why—ah—yes. That is—we'll fix it somehow."

"So I thought," resumed Anthony Carper, seemingly well pleased with the prospect before him. "And now to our business. You know I wrote you that my affairs were all settled up, and that I had come home with the documents in my possession. And you know, too, that I said I should want you to help me."

"You said you should place——"

"Place all the documents in your hands," interposed the old man, as Thomas stammered and turned his face away. "Exactly, my dear nephew. And that's what I am coming at. You'll pardon me for running away from you so soon; but if you knew how I have held the sweet memory of that infant in my soul—how I have seen her grow to a blushing damsel in my day-dreams, and in my night-dreams—how I have hoped that she, the sole heir of my blood, and the sole descendant of my name, should become the light and joy of my home—if you knew all this, you would not wonder at my haste."

"I do not wonder, uncle, nor do I blame you. I rather commend you for it."

"Thank you, Thomas. And now here's the business.

As the old man spoke he drew from his breast-pocket a large pocket-book, which he opened upon the desk.

"You are a broker, Thomas, and of course do much business with all the monied institutions."

Thomas admitted that his business relations were extensive with nearly all the great money concerns of the country.

"So I thought," pursued Uncle Anthony; "and consequently, as I wrote you, I shall look to you for help. Now here are drafts and bills of exchange to the amount of a hundred thousand dollars. When I squared up at Calcutta, where my heaviest partner lived, I had my property put into this shape. I thought it the safest and most convenient. Some of these drafts are upon Boston, some upon New York, and the rest upon Philadelphia. They will all be honored at sight. The bills of exchange you can easily turn into current funds. You have a good safe?"

"Yes—an excellent one," replied the nephew, more nervous than before.

"Then these will be safer with you than with me. If I am gone two or three days—Oh, I hope she will love me. You think she will, Thomas?"

"I know she will," said the nephew, excitedly.

"Bless you! If I should remain with her two or three days, you must be looking for some good and safe investment of my funds."

"I can easily find that, uncle. I do much business in that line. I should be very careful, too. I should feel as though I were dealing for myself."

"I believe you would, Thomas, and I shall let you try your hand at it. So suppose you just make a little minute of these papers, and give me a receipt for them. That will make all clear and straight."

Thomas Gondam moved up to his desk, and the papers were placed before him. He took his pen, but it was some moments before he could compose himself to the work. At length, however, he ventured to write, and finally had the receipt drawn up in full form.

"There," he said, handing it to his uncle, "is all you will need."

"I only want it for a sort of memorandum, Thomas." He ran his eye over the paper, and having found every draft and bill set down, he was satisfied. Why should he suspect Thomas Gondam of dishonesty? He did not. He knew that the broker was his own nephew, and that he had reared and cared for him in childhood; and, reading the laws of love and gratitude from his own heart, he felt sure that Thomas would not deceive him, or wrong him, for worlds. He was a little childish—a very little—and in this light he showed his advanced age more than in any other; but then his childishness showed itself more in his love than in anything else.

"Now you understand, Thomas," resumed Uncle Anthony, laying his fingers upon the papers, "you must exercise your own judgment, though you need not invest any of it till I see you again. But you can get it all into current funds, and then look around, you know. And now for Rosalind."

"Ah—uncle, dear—I have just thought," cried the nephew, starting out from a troubled reverie. "There is a stage going out to-night. It leaves at half-past six, or seven; I forget which; and it will take you within a few rods of Mr. King's house—it may be a quarter of a mile."

"I can easily walk that, Thomas."

"It is now six," added the nephew, referring to his watch. "We shall have plenty of time."

"Time enough—though I should rather be too early than too late."

"Certainly," said Thomas; and then, after a few moments' hesitation, he continued, in a careful, guarded tone, but which was meant for a very careless one: "You have met with some old friends since you landed in New York, I suppose?"

"Not one, Thomas. You are the first to welcome me—the first I have seen whom I can remember to have ever seen before."

"Is it possible!" slipped from Mr. Gondam's lips, without any particular expression. His whole mind was upon the next question.

"I don't know much about the dangers of an ocean passage," he said, "but I should think one would need to be very careful who carried so much of value as you brought with you."

"Aha, my boy," chuckled the old man, "I was careful enough, I can assure you. Not a soul, save you—not a soul this side of India—knows whether I have brought home one hundred dollars or one hundred thousand. I have been very careful, I can promise you."

Thomas Gondam arose from his chair and went to the window. Presently he turned, and remarked that they had better be walking up towards the stage office. Uncle Anthony thought so, too, so they set off together. It was just half-past six when they reached the office, and the stage would leave in half an hour.

"If you have business, Thomas, don't wait for me, for I can pass my time very well over the newspapers here."

"I have some business, uncle—important business—which I ought not to neglect—an appointment—at seven. I shall have time. But—I don't like to leave you."

"Don't be a fool, Tom. Go at once. Business first, and pleasure afterwards. Good-night. Give my love to—to— What's your wife's name?"

"Martha."

"O, yes. Give my love to her, and tell her she'll see enough of me ere long. There—I'll be in the first of the week. Good-night."

"Good-night, uncle. Take good care of yourself."

And so they parted, and the old man was left alone among strangers. He took up a newspaper, and the first article upon which his eye rested was, "A HORRIBLE MURDER!" He read it with a shudder, and then let the paper fall upon his knees. The shadows in the street were growing deeper, and the shadows in the smoke-begrimmed stage-office had merged into a pervading duskishness.

"A Horrible Murder!" muttered Anthony Carper to himself.

And from out the evening shadows there fell one upon his soul. It was a dim, strange, shapeless shadow; but, beneath the influence of what he had read, it took the form of a dark hand clutching a knife. A cold, clinging shadow it was, and the old man tried to shake it off.

"I hope she will love me," he murmured, bending his thoughts to the one great hope of his old age. "I hope she will love me!"

CHAPTER II.

THE RUSTY HAMMER.

Thomas Gondam made all possible haste back to his own house, and went directly to his private room. He took the drafts and bills from the little trunk into which he had put them, and looked them over. His manner was hurried and excited, and ever and anon he cast his eyes about him, as though some one were near him. When he had run the papers from one hand to the other, he tied them securely together, and put them into the trunk again, and this trunk he locked up in his desk.

"I'll put them in my safe to-morrow," he said, as he started across the floor. "One hundred and fifteen thousand dollars! What does he want of it? How many men live to be as old as he is? Very few—very few. One hundred and fifteen thousand? He oughtn't to have written to me that he would bring home so much. He oughtn't to have written that he should trust me so. This devil wouldn't have got into me if he had kept quiet.

"But it's been in me for a long time, though—for nearly sixteen years." He didn't speak this in words. He only thought it to himself. "For sixteen years the devil has been in me, though not exactly in this shape. And shall I have been possessed of a devil so long, and not reap the benefit now? No!"

This last word Thomas spoke aloud, and with much force, and then he turned from the room. In the lower hall he stopped and put on his hat and overcoat, and then he went into the apartment where his wife sat.

"I am going up to my office, Martha, and shall not be back before nine or ten. I have business there—a man is to meet me—very urgent business—at my office. If any one calls for me you can say I am at my office, but too busy to see any one. Tell them to call to-morrow. What are you looking at? Don't you believe me!"

Mrs. Gondam did not disbelieve him. She looked as she did, because she was surprised and puzzled. It was the first time her husband had ever thought it worth his while to inform her concerning his movements. His habit was to go out and come in—to stay out or stay in—without hinting to her his purpose

"Certainly I believe you, Thomas," she said, meekly.

"Then you needn't look at me with such an evil eye. I simply told you because—I thought you'd like to know."

"I'm sure I thank you, Thomas—indeed I do."

"I want none of your thanks. I told you where I was going because—I thought—perhaps—the man whom I am to see might call here for me. That's all. Now you understand."

And with this Thomas Gondam left the room and left the house; but instead of passing directly out to the street, he went into the little shed back of his dwelling, and after feeling about in the gloom for awhile, he found what he sought. It was a heavy nail-hammer, old and rusty, but yet fit for service. This he put into the side pocket of his inner coat, and then buttoned the outer one snugly over it. After this he left the narrow court, and walked swiftly up the street. The collar of his coat was turned up, and the rim of his hat pulled down. He did not stop at the first stable he came to, for he was known there. He passed on until he reached one where he had never before stopped, and here he entered the little office where the man in charge sat.

"I want a team for Brighton," he said. "A good one—a fast one."

The proprietor looked up sharply into the speaker's face, and surveyed him for some moments without speaking.

"Will you let me have one?" Gondam asked, almost angrily.

"But I don't know you, sir," the keeper said, still surveying his visitor with a searching look.

"Don't know me? Must you know everybody that hires a horse for a few miles' drive?"

"Ah—there you have it, sir. *Is* it for a *few* miles' drive? I had a horse, only a few months ago, driven off upon the same promise, and I found both him and the driver in Vermont."

"Bah! Do you take me for a thief, sir? I want your horse to go to Brighton. Do I look like a robber, sir?"

"O, no—not at all. But still, I'd rather not let you have a horse. It's late."

Thomas Gondam trembled from head to foot. Could it be that his purpose was suspected? Could it be that the Mark already cast its shadow upon his brow! He stepped back, and laid the back of his right hand into the palm of his left, and patted them slowly and thoughtfully. Might not his hurried manner, and his turned-up coat-collar, and his turned-down hat, have worked against him?

"Good sir," he said, very calmly, but somewhat hoarsely, "I am in a great hurry. I have just got news from Brighton that gives me great uneasiness. A near relative of mine is in danger. If you fear that I shall abscond with your team, I will put into your hands the full amount of its value in money. I will do this because I cannot stop to argue the question further."

"Then you have money?" the stable-keeper remarked, and as he did so, he repeated his scrutiny. He evidently saw much in that bloodless face, and in those deep, long crow's-tracks, which had entirely escaped the notice of Uncle Anthony.

"Here," cried Thomas, impatiently, drawing a parcel of bank-notes from his business like pocket-book. "How much is your team worth?"

"How long did you mean to be gone?" the keeper asked, with more of a business tone; for the sight of the money and the plethoric pocket-book seemed to re-assure him.

"Two hours—perhaps three."

"To what part of Brighton?"

"I don't know exactly. I shall find out when I get there."

"Well—I guess I can accommodate you. No, put up your money. Never mind. But—you looked so— The fact is, sir, I have to be careful. John!"

A little side door was opened, and the hostler's head made its appearance.

"Going alone, sir?"

"Yes," said Gondam.

"Put Old Sojer into one of the light buggies. The *gentleman is in a hurry. He's a good* horse, sir," the keeper added, after John had gone, "perfectly kind and gentle."

"*And will he go fast?*"

"As fast as you'll care to drive on a dark night."

"Dark? Will it be dark, think you?"

"Why—bless me—you aint afraid of the dark, are you?" the man said, noticing his customer's strange manner. "The horse 'll keep the road. It's wide and good to Brighton, you know."

"I am used to it."

"Then you'll go safely."

As the man said this, he moved towards the little door, and in passing his customer, he hit the back of his hand against something heavy and solid.

"Armed, eh?—A pistol?" he uttered, rubbing his hand.

"A pistol!" shouted Thomas, starting. "No!—Curses on the fellow," he added, as the keeper went out, "why does he look at me so? What does he think I want with a pistol?" And the nephew clasped his hand upon the rusty hammer, as though to assure himself that it could not fall out.

Presently the man re-appeared, and informed his customer that the team was ready. The latter looked at his watch, and it wanted five minutes of seven. He leaped into the light wagon and drove quickly off.

"The stage will start in five minutes," he said to himself. "I might get ahead of it, but I won't venture. I'll take another route—a longer one—but safer. If this beast has decent speed I can travel two miles to the coach's one."

Thomas Gondam drove into Court street, but he did not turn towards Brighton. No. He passed down Sudbury street—across Haymarket square—and over the bridge to Charlestown. Thus far the stage might have been upon his track, but here he slipped down by the Navy Yard, and drove out over Chelsea Bridge. As he gained the country beyond Winnissimmet Village the sun went down, and ere he began to climb the hills the stars were setting themselves in the dark vault above and about him. Away he drove, at headlong speed, past scattered farm-houses and fragrant orchards, taking no notice of stars or blossoms, and only called from his set thought when some dog, more pertinacious than the rest, ran a long distance by the side of his wagon, howling and yelping till the very night grew hideous with the noise. Then the furious driver would turn and curse the brute, and wonder why he was thus followed, and thus howled at.

At length he turned to the right—a mile, or so—and then a long sweep to the left. He crossed the Newburyport Turnpike, and at the distance of a mile beyond he came to the foot of a hill, where the trees grew thickly, and the light of the stars was shut out. He found an old wood-path, where the farmers hauled their fuel in winter-time, and having leaped from the wagon, he led the horse in here, far out of sight from the road, and made him fast to a small tree. Then he went back to the highway, and after he had peered cautiously about him, as though he would assure himself that no one was near, he turned into a narrow, dark road that led up the hill. When half way up, the woods were left behind, and the broker came upon the outskirts of a well-cultivated farm.

Upon the crown of the slope stood the farm-house, with its barns and sheds, and as Gondam saw that lights were gleaming from the windows, he hesitated. He did not wish to pass *that* house too near. He did not wish that any inmate of the quiet domicil should see *him* upon that road so late. So he climbed over the wall to the left, and made his way up through the pasture, among the barberry bushes. Finally, he stopped and looked about him. Upon his right, and below him now, lay the farm-house, and beyond, down this hill, and down another, he could see the church-spires of the village, just visible in the dim starlight. Upon his left the hill went higher up, with here and there great oaks looming against the sky—oaks which the thoughtful farmer of a generation passed away had left to give shade to his herd from the heat of the noontide sun, and from the spreading branches of which the children, far and near, came to gather sweet acorns. Before him, at the foot of the hill, and quarter of a mile distant, lay the main road to Boston—the road which all the mail-coaches for the North traveled.

Thomas Gondam bent his ear to listen, and he was sure he heard the rumbling of heavy wheels in the distance. The sound was from the south, and the peculiar rattle, unlike that of a baggage-team, gave him assurance that it was the stage. He started on down the hill, and soon leaped over the wall into the narrow road again. There were thick hedges of barberry and wild-rose bushes flanking the way here, and presently he stopped and crawled away into the deep shade among the buds and thorns.

The heavy coach came rattling down the hill, and at the foot of it stopped. Time sufficient for an old man to get out elapsed, and then it rolled away again upon the level road. Gondam crouched more closely in his hiding-place, and waited. Minutes passed—long, anxious minutes—but he heard no footsteps. More minutes crawled on, and the nephew peered forth from his covert.

"Death! Why don't he come!" he muttered. "Is he so old that he had to rest on such a walk?—Or—has he missed the way? But he couldn't miss it. The driver must have told him the right way."

And yet more minutes passed on, and the hidden man was becoming confident that the traveler had missed his way, when a footstep broke upon his ear. It was a slow, measured tread, and the iron-shod staff kept time upon the stones and pebbles which the spring rains had washed bare in the road. Thomas Gondam clutched the rusty hammer with a nervous grip, and gathered himself more closely beneath the sharp thorns.

The footsteps drew near, and presently the old man passed the covert. The starbeams fell upon the silver locks, and a dim light rested upon the timeworn face. The thin lips moved, and a petition from the earnest soul went up to Heaven:

"I hope she will love me! O—great God grant it! I hope she will! I hope she will!"

Like a cat Thomas Gondam crept from his hiding-place, and with a noiseless tread he advanced to the pebbly track. Then—like a cat still—he leaped forward. There was a heavy blow—another—another—and another—and Anthony Carper lay stark and still in the road. The hushed lips uttered no more prayer—they could utter no curse. The stars looked down, and the beams from their many eyes of light fell upon clots of blood, and upon a lifeless form!

Thomas Gondam drew the body to the green-sward, and there he rifled all the pockets. He took everything by which the name of the old man could possibly be learned by those who might find the body, and then he dragged the victim up to the wall, laid the limp form upon its face, and tumbled the stones down upon it. Thus men would think the poor wayfarer fell, and met his death by accident.

The nephew hurried away—over the pasture and *over the hill*—and when he had led his horse once more to the *road, he leaped into the wagon,* and drove *furiously back towards the city.* The *rusty hammer—with* more than rust on it now—rattled upon the seat, and Gondam lifted it into his lap. The dogs came out, and howled and yelled at him again. They followed him long and persistently, and at times he thought they snuffed up the night air as though they scented blood!

Away he drove, holding the rein with a quaking hand, and when he stopped at the stable, the horse was reeking with foam. He heeded not the keeper's reproof—he paid, and hurried away, the rusty hammer swinging heavily against his hip at every step.

CHAPTER III.

PLOTTING.

"Are you sick, Thomas?" Martha Gondam asked, on the morning following the events just recorded. They were at the breakfast table.

"Sick!" uttered the husband, looking up. "Why do you ask that?"

"Why—you tremble so—and look so pale—and—and——"

"And what?"

"You groaned and talked so in your sleep last night."

"Ha! Did I talk?"

"Yes."

"What did I say?" Thomas had dropped his knife and fork, and glared at his wife with the look of a frightened fiend.

"I couldn't make out much you said, dear husband."

"But you heard something. Out with it! Don't sit there like a mope! What did I say?"

"You were talking about gold."

"About—GOLD! What did I say about it?"

"I couldn't tell—indeed I couldn't," urged Martha, who had become frightened by her husband's startling manner. "You were saying something about great masses of gold; and once you were driving a horse, and you thought dogs were barking at you, and you told them you had no—no——"

"No what?"

"No BLOOD to give them!"

Thomas Gondam turned paler than before, and his frame shook. An angry response was upon his lips, but he kept it back.

"Did I say anything more?" he finally asked, gazing sharply into his wife's face.

"No, Thomas. I awoke you then, for you seemed to be in great pain."

"And I called no names?"

"I didn't hear you call any."

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed Thomas Gondam, with an effort, after he had partially managed to compose himself. "I did not think it would work upon me so. But I had great cause for dreaming, Martha. The man I saw last night— Ah—did any one call for me?"

"No."

"I knew *my* man didn't call, for he was at the office when I got there. But he has a great plan on foot, and I am to help him. He has land, Martha—*land.* It is LAND we are to work upon. He confided to me alone. He knows my honesty. Why do you look at me so? Don't you believe me? Death! if you doubt my word——"

"I don't, Thomas—indeed I don't."

"You'd better not! By the cross, you'd better not! But we'll make money out of this speculation. I am to put in ten thousand dollars, and in the end we'll realize a hundred thousand!"

"Ten thousand—you can put in?"

"Fool! don't you believe me? Do you think I can't raise ten thousand dollars? Do you suppose I've been digging and scrubbing these years past for nothing? Aha—it's a great speculation!—a wonderful speculation! If the land sells as I think it will, I shall be rich. But mind you—not a word of this. I mustn't be known in the business. My man will not have it. Even when I am rich, those who buy the land are never to know that I had any hand in the trade. I think you can be secret."

"You know I can, Thomas."

"I know you are a woman."

"And a wife," added poor Martha, imploringly.

"Then prove yourself a true one."

And thus speaking, Thomas Gondam started up from the table and left the room. He did not see the tears that came to his wife's eyes, nor did he know of the pang that shot through her heart. He had enough upon his own heart. He ascended to his private apartment, and locked himself in, and then went to his desk. He took out the package of drafts and bills which he had received from his uncle, and having stowed them away in his breast-pocket, and buttoned up his coat, he went away. When he reached his office he placed the package in his safe, and locked it up. He sat down at his desk, but he could not write. A foot-fall upon the stairs frightened him; and even the pattering of feet upon the side-walk below kept him in a continuous tremor.

For three days Gondham remained thus. His hand trembled when he ate, and his heart flew to his throat when any one called upon business. On the morning of the fourth day, when he reached his office, he opened the newspaper, and after searching for some time, his eye fell upon the following paragraph:

"FOUND DEAD.—On Sunday morning last a dead body was found by the side of one of the cross-roads south of M—— Village. It was that of an old man, who was not known in that region, and nothing was found which could give any possible clue to his name or place of abode. There were several severe bruises upon his head, and it is supposed that, in attempting to climb over the wall, he must have fallen, with part of the wall atop of him. He was buried by the town, and the garments he wore are in possession of the keeper of the poor-house, where they can be seen by any one who may hope to recognize them. The man was slight of frame, with snowy white hair, and not far from eighty years of age."

Thomas Gondam leaped from his chair when he had read this, and clapped his hands with intense satisfaction.

"Safe!" he uttered, with a stamp of the foot. "Safe—safe—safe! Nobody knew him—nobody knew he was in the city! He's under ground, and no mortal tongue can blab! Now I am rich!"

The broker paced up and down the office a while, and finally put on his hat.

"I think I can do business now," he resumed, rubbing his hands as though preparing for work. "I must get the girl out of the way, for there is no knowing what may come up one of these days. Egad, it's lucky I thought to deceive her as I did; but I ought to have changed her name. Why didn't I think of that with the rest? However, I'll soon have it changed now."

When Thomas Gondam gained the street he walked more like himself than he had done for a few days back, and his step had an emphasis in it, as though he were continually saying within himself, "*I am safe.*" When he stopped it was before a pawn-broker's shop, at the dingy windows of which were exposed a few dirty watches, some cheap musical instruments, and a variety of other articles, such as may be usually seen in places of the kind. Gondam entered here, and the tinkling of a bell, which had been hit by the door, soon brought the presiding genius of the place from a back room.

"*Ah—Gondam—glad to see you.*"

"*How d'ye do, Ludder?*"

"Well," said Ludder; and the two shook hands.

Michael Ludder was a short, thick-set man, with an evil-looking face. He had a round, pumpkin-like head, covered with short, black, crisp hair; a pair of sunken eyes, which seemed to be hidden away for the purpose of seeing without being seen; a flat nose, wide-spread at the bottom, with the end protruding in a bulb like a cherry; and a large mouthful of dirty, irregular teeth. His face was dark—very dark—rendered so by the beard, which, extending from the throat almost to the eyes, and being black in color, grew so thick and stout that the stubs, even though shaven close, seemed to leave no room for skin. As he came more into the light you could see that his eyes were not straight. They had a sidelong twist, which caused him to look very much as does a man who is blind upon one side.

"Ludder, I have business with you," said the visitor, after he had assured himself that they were alone in the little box-like office.

"I am glad of that," cried the pawnbroker, with an oath. "I haven't done a bit of business these three days. The last penny I turned was on Saturday night."

"I'll give you a chance now to turn a number of 'em. But let's get out of here. Where's your private room?"

"Right in there," said Ludder, leading the way to the room from which he emerged.

When they were in, and the door shut, they seated themselves, and Gondam commenced.

"Ludder, I know I can trust you."

"Egad—I should think so," replied the pawnbroker, with a meaning smile. "'Pears to me we've both on us got hold enough on each other not to be afraid of trust now. If I should peach—why, there's plenty o' holes through which you could ram me into the jug. And, likewise, *viserverser,* as the lawyers say. Eh?"

"Yes—I understand," resumed Gondam, made a little nervous by this mention of the "*jug,*" for there was a very large "hole" through which he might drop if another living being knew of it. "But I'll trust you, of course. I only spoke——"

"Tut, tut, man! There's a perfect confidence between us. Now go ahead."

"Let's see—your wife is dead?" said Gondam.

"One of 'em is; but I've got a good one left. Patty is with me."

"And who is Patty?"

"That's all I can tell you. She never had any other name. Her mother lives down in Richmond street, and Patty grew up in the gutters. But she's a smart one. She answers every purpose."

"And is she to be trusted?"

"She?—Patty? 'Gad, I'd trust her with my life."

"Then I'll come at my business," said Gondam, drawing his chair nearer to his companion, and speaking a little lower. "A little way in the country there is a young girl. She may be in my way. She was left in my care when an infant, and I gave her to a farmer to rear up. He asked me if I should ever want her again. I thought—you know I've got a very respectable head of my own."

"Let you alone for that, old fellow," said Ludder, appreciatingly.

"Well," resumed the other, "the thought struck me that at some time it might be possible that I should want the girl again. I didn't know what property she might have left her—I didn't know what might turn up—so, thinks I to myself, it can't do any harm if it don't do any good; and, moreover, I shall have all the advantage on my side. And I told the farmer that I was the child's uncle, which wasn't a great shot out of the way, seeing that her mother was my own cousin; and I told 'em that the little one's parents had both absconded for some especial purpose—what, I didn't know, but rather gave them to understand that 'twas only on account of debt. So, ye see, the girl and her friends think that her parents may be still living."

"But they aint?" interrupted Michael, interrogatively.

"No—not a bit of it. Her father died before she was born, and her mother died a few months after. She often asks me if I have heard anything from her parents, but I always tell her no. She can't dispute anything that I tell her."

"Well—that's a kind of comfortable beginning," remarked Ludder, attentively.

"Yes," added Gondam, casting his eyes furtively about him. "And now I want you to help me. I don't want her to remain there any longer. I want to get her out of the way."

"Eh? *Out?*" whispered Ludder, laying his finger upon his throat.

"No—*not* THAT!" cried Gondam, quickly, and with a start.

"I'm glad," returned Ludder, in a tone of relief. "I can do some pretty tough things, but not *that!*—I couldn't do that!"

"No. All I want you to do is, to lay claim to her *as your own child!* You can do that. You can keep her safely here, under the cover of paternal authority, until some better disposition can be made of her. She is pretty—very pretty—and it wouldn't be hard to find some sale for her. You understand me."

Yes—he was understood.

"And you could trust Patty to help you in good faith?"

"Yes."

"Then you'll take her?—you'll swear that you are her father?"

Michael Ludder took time to answer this. The girl must be of some importance. She must stand between Gondam and some very desirable object. He was Gondam's friend, bound to him by many ties of strange deeds; but he could not afford to throw away a "chance" for mere friendship.

"I s'pose I could do such a thing," he said, guardedly.

"And of course you will."

"I'll do what's fair."

"So will I," returned Gondam, seeing his companion's drift. "I make nothing at present by the girl's disappearance, and it may never help me to a penny; but I will pay you well."

"Now you begin to talk," cried the pawnbroker, with a sparkle in his crooked eyes.

"Yes—I will pay you well. I will pay you whatever you say it is worth."

"Ah—you know best about that, for the worth is all on your side. You know these sort of things don't come under the head of regular business."

"That's so," said Gondam, after a few moments' reflection. "I understand you, Michael; and I'll make you an offer. I'll give you a hundred dollars when the girl is safe beneath your roof; and I'll give you fifteen dollars a week as long as you keep her. What say you to that?"

Had Michael Ludder been asked in the first place if he would take any girl for such a consideration, he would have most unhesitatingly answered yes; but he had had time for reflection. His friend had made a liberal offer. Wouldn't it be well to get a little more if he could? The proposition struck him very favorably.

"Why," he replied, thoughtfully, "I must say, that for an ordinary affair your offer would be a noble one; but——"

"You want more."

"Not if you can't afford it, Gondam. But—now—I'd kind o' thought—ye see I am rather hard up just now—that about *two* hundred when ye fetched her, and then, say—*twenty* dollars a week, while you wanted me to keep her. You know 'taint a very easy job; and if I do it, I mean to do it up brown."

"Well, Michael, be it as you say. I'll pay your price. And now, when will you be ready for her?"

"Just when you bring her."

"And you know Patty will be true?"

"I'll swear for her."

"Then it's all right. I'll have her here as soon as possible. Mind you—her name is Rosalind."

"But where shall I tell her we've been all this time?" asked Ludder, with commendable solicitude.

"I was coming to that, for these things must be all arranged before hand."

And thereupon Thomas Gondam laid down more fully the plans to be followed. He instructed his accomplice in all that was necessary to a thorough accomplishment of the business, and then they went into the front office.

"I'll have her here to-morrow evening, if possible," said Thomas; "so you may prepare to receive her."

"I'll be ready—never fear."

Upon this Gondam left the place, and turned once more towards his office. His plans were working well. In the dazzle of the gold heap he saw before him he lost sight for the while of the dark spirit he had conjured up. And in the thought of safety which had come over him—safety from detection in a great crime—he forgot for a time the Eye that never sleeps.

On the following day, in the afternoon, Thomas Gondam hired another team—this time nearer home, and again he was on the road to the country. He carried no rusty hammer now; but he carried a smooth, lying, hypocritical tongue instead!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

RELIABILITY.

No man takes so ill the least doubting of his word as he who is, incontinently, *a liar.*

"Do you suppose that I sit (or stand) here telling lies?" asks the indignant being at whose assertions you have presumed to shake your audacious head.

Now you don't "suppose" any such thing—you *know* it; but you don't like to tell him so in so many words; therefore you dodge the question.

"Why *should* I suppose you to be guilty of what no gentleman could do? But the wisest of us may sometimes make mistakes or misstatements."

Now it is certainly a great effort of self-denial to swallow down the feeling that prompts you to turn short on such a person, with the words—"You *do* lie; and you know that I know it." But, "if it be possible, so much as in you lieth, live *peaceably* with all men, and all women." This is the text that hath help for such occasions. But oh! that all men everywhere *would* repent "of their falsehoods and deceptions," and "*putting away* lying, speak every man *truth* with his neighbor." How much trouble and sin would thus be saved. How much less of "wrath against the day of wrath" would be heaped up in human souls.

A. M.

"TOO MIRTHFUL."

"Do stop that girl's laughing! It really makes me nervous to hear her. From morning till night her mouth is open, either laughing or singing, just as if there was no trouble or sin in the world. I think the brethren were in a hurry when they admitted such a rattle brain thing as *she* is to the church!"

So Hetty was made to suppress her glee, and to sing low. This was the utmost that her rulers could accomplish, for the girl's *heart* was light within her, and overflow it would.

But check after check was given her; and month after month she was told, with awful seriousness, that she was too wild, too merry, too imaginative; that it was her duty to measure her steps, her morals, her very smiles; to hold down her imagination; always to think "kitchen" when she wanted to think "parlor, painting, and music;" always to turn her thoughts towards cooking, mending, and sewing societies when she caught them starting off for a revel in the regions of beauty and delight—for the fair, fair skies of fancy; and always to wait till she didn't care whether she moved or stood still, spoke or held her tongue, when she glowed with a quick impulse to do or say something.

Well, they managed to tone Hetty down somewhat; but she never could be made to become exactly serious and proper until the hand of sorrow took her heart and pressed it so hard, so *very* hard, that the joyousness which had so long dwelt singing in it was crushed out, and went, none knew whither. Many burdens were bound for poor Hetty's heart, and it bore them bravely till the spring of joy was broken; then each additional load pressed down with more hopeless weight. Now she is what blindly they tried to render her when she was a child.

Oh! *let* the children and the maidens laugh and sing. Do not—oh! do *not*—be always checking and rebuking them for being gay. Little time enough have they before care will begin its gnawing, and grief its pain. They will grow old and grave anon. Never fear. Their glory will soon enough be darkened, their buoyancy cease. The canker and the blight will not pass by them. Darkness and disaster, sooner or later, shuts down the morning light of all. Oh—the fated, the unconscious young! But let them, while the impulse yet is in them, laugh and play, and dance and sing. And if, perchance, ere the merry days are over, any *sleep,* murmur not. "Happy the early dead."

C. S.

* * *

THE EFFECTS OF FEMALE EDUCATION.

The difference between the mental qualities of the sexes is owing, we apprehend, far more to education than to nature. At all events there is no such natural difference as warrants the distinction we make in the mental discipline we provide for them. There are certain professional studies with which no one thinks of vexing the mind of any one man or woman but those who practice the professions; but why, in a good English library, there should be one-half of it, and that the better half, which a young woman is not expected to read, it is difficult to understand, and will not admit of patient reflection. Why may not a Locke, or a Paley, or a Dugald Stewart, train the mind of a future mother of a family? or why may not an intelligent young woman be a companion of her husband in his more serious moods of thought, as well as in his gayer and more trifling hours? Would the world lose anything of social happiness or moral refinement by the intellectual equality of the two sexes? You vex the memory of a young girl with dictionaries and vocabularies without end; tax her memory in every conceivable manner; and at an after age you give the literature of sentiment freely to her pillage; but that which should step between the two—the culture of the reason—this is entirely forbidden. If she learns a dozen modern languages, she does not read a single book in any one of them that would make her think.

* * *

THE EVIL OF A BAD TEMPER.

A bad temper is a curse to the possessor, and its influence is most deadly wherever it is found. It is allied to martyrdom to be obliged to live with one of a complaining temper. To hear one eternal round of complaint and murmuring, to have every pleasant thought scared away by their evil spirit, is a sore trial. It is like the sting of a scorpion—a perpetual nettle, destroying your peace, rendering life a burthen. Its influence is deadly; and the purest and sweetest atmosphere is contaminated into a deadly miasma wherever this evil genius prevails. It has been said truly, that while we ought not to let the bad temper of others influence us, it would be as unreasonable to spread a plaster of Spanish flies upon the skin, and not expect it to draw, as to think of a family not suffering because of the bad temper of any of its inmates. One string out of tune will destroy the music of an instrument, otherwise perfect; so if all the members of a church, neighborhood, and family, do not cultivate a kind and affectionate temper, there will be discord and every evil work.

* * *

THE INFLUENCE OF DRESS.

Men are estimated by other men according to their capacity and willingness to be in some way or other useful; and though, with the foolish and vain part of women, fine clothes frequently do something, yet the greater part of the sex are much too penetrating to draw their conclusions solely from the outside show of a man: they look deeper, and find their criterions whereby to judge. And, after all, if the fine clothes obtain you a wife, will they bring you, in that wife, frugality, good sense, and that sort of attachment that is likely to be lasting? Natural beauty of person is quite another thing; this always has, it always will, and must have, some weight even with men, and great weight with women. But this does not want to be set off by expensive clothes. Female eyes are, in such cases, very sharp: they can discover beauty though half hidden by beard, and even by dirt, and surrounded by rags: and, take this as a secret worth half a fortune to you, that women, however personally vain they may be themselves, despise personal vanity in men.

* * *

THE LESSON THE OLD WOULD TEACH US.—It is astonishing how chilling the words of age fall upon the glowing enthusiasm of youth. As we go on through life, doubtless we gather all the same cold truths, but it is by degrees, not all at once, as when the freezing experience of many years is poured forth, like a sudden fall of snow upon our hearts. Lucky, most lucky is it, that we cannot believe the lesson which the old would teach us; for certainly if we were as wise when we came into life as when we go out of it, their would be nothing great, and very little good done in the world; we mean that there would be no enthusiasm of wish or of demeanor.

* * *

ATHEISM.—Men are atheistical because they are first vicious, and question the truth of Christianity, because they hate the practice of it.

TO MINNIE W——

BY AUGUSTA HERBERT.

Dear Minnie, you know that I love you,
And want you to walk in the road
That leads through this region of sorrow,
Right up to our Father's abode.

I know you are weary and lonely,
And long for true loving and rest;
But neither will ever be given
Till sought on the dear Saviour's breast.

You say that the way is a *hard* one
That leads to the mansions above;
But oh! 'tis the easiest, Minnie,
O'er which our weak footsteps can move.

For *there* are no sloughs and no pitfalls,
No gins and no snares for our feet;
And the flowers in the narrow way blowing,
Oh! Minnie, are heavenly sweet.

You say that you know not to enter
This narrow and difficult way—
Why, Minnie, *'tis only beginning*
Your Saviour and Lord to obey.

If deep in your soul is a yearning
To love and to honor your King,
Do nothing you know to be sinful;
He loves you—oh, *trust* Him, and sing.

There's nothing mysterious needful;
His part He already has done;
Do you *just go to obey Him*,
And, lo! *your new life has begun.*

Now this is the love-song I sing thee,
This midnight, before the fair morn,
On which, in the Orient holy,
Our only true Lover was born

THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING.

A ROMANCE OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE ISLAND PRINCESS;" "THE DESERTED WIFE;" &c., &c., &c.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CPAPTER XXXIX.

VINDICATION.

There is the wisdom of a stern content
When Poverty can blight the just and good,
When Infamy dares mock the innocent,
And cherished friends turn with the multitude
To trample:—this was ours, and we unshaken stood!

Now has descended a serener hour,
And with inconstant fortune, friends return;
Though suffering leaves the knowledge and the power
Which says:—Let scorn be not repaid with scorn.
SHELLEY.

The visitors were then accommodated with seats on the right of the patient, in the space between the bed and the front windows, and with their faces in the direction of the door, which was just opposite to the foot of the bed.

I am thus particular in describing the relative position of the room and its occupants, that the reader may better understand the spectacle that afterwards presented itself.

While the gentlemen sat there, they sought, by quiet conversation, to soothe the spirits of the sick man. And the patient had struggled successfully for self-control, for he sustained with composure his own part of the discussion;—admitting that the visitation to which he was nightly subjected might be either an imposture or an optical illusion; but confessing that in the present shattered condition of his health he had not nerve enough, at the hour of its arrival, to investigate the true nature of the apparition.

Thus rationally and composedly he conversed until the clock struck ten, when he started, shuddered, and sunk into silence.

Soon after the door opened, and old John entered and whispered to Mr. Hayhurst, who heard with surprise, and in his turn whispered to Colonel Shannon—

"Mr. Godfrey Dulanie is brought hither, in charge of the sheriff and his officers—was ever anything so strange!"

"It is by order of the governor. I will go down and see to it," replied the colonel, in a low tone, rising and going to the door.

"What is the matter? what is it?" inquired the sick man, nervously.

"Nothing, sir, but a messenger come to speak with me," answered Colonel Shannon, with well-assumed indifference, as he left the room and went below stairs, where in the front passage he found the prisoner in charge of the sheriff, and strongly guarded by constables, and also the prisoner's wife, pale with anxiety.

Nodding slightly to Godfrey and Honora, from whom he still reserved his confidence, he went up to the sheriff, and said—

"Mr. Harrison, his excellency requests that you bring your prisoner up to the hall connecting with Dr. Henry's bed-chamber, and there wait further directions. And *I* request that you follow me very quietly, so as not to disturb the sick man."

The sheriff bowed in silence, and with his prisoner and attendants he followed the colonel up stairs.

Leaving the party seated on the settee in the upper hall, Colonel Shannon re-entered the sick-room.

Here a gloomy silence and a semi-darkness prevailed. The lamps, for want of trimming, burned dimly; the fire had nearly died out; the visitors, under some depressing spell, had ceased to converse; and the patient had sunk into a half stupid state.

Colonel Shannon resumed his seat, and waited a few minutes to ascertain whether the sick man was really almost insensible to what was passing around him, and then approaching the governor, he whispered—

"I think this as favorable an opportunity as can be obtained for bringing in our man."

The governor looked up, and nodded assent.

And Colonel Shannon went quietly to the door and beckoned the sheriff; and the next moment the whole party softly entered the chamber, and took their places in the shadow between the left side of the bed and the blackened fire-place. Their faces also were naturally set in the direction of the door.

Governor Sterne, who evidently had not expected the arrival of Honora, flushed darkly at sight of her; but soon recovered his composure.

They had not long been seated when the clock struck eleven. At the sound, the man upon the bed shivered through all his frame, half started, and then fell back and relapsed into stupor.

The next hour was one of intense anxiety—almost suspended animation—to the watchers in the chamber. As the minute hand of the mantle clock crept its weary round, the very ticking of the pendulum sounded preternaturally loud and ominous.

Without, the storm had raged itself to rest.

Within, the watchers had dropped into total silence; the fire was "black out;" the lamps were burning with long wicks, and red, lurid flames, that only served to make "darkness visible."

The watchers waited, in total silence, and with almost breathless interest. What would be the issue of this midnight vigil? Would the apparition, so well attested by Mr. Hayhurst, again make its appearance? Would it prove to be an imposture, that they could examine, handle, and unmask? or an optical illusion, visible only to the sick brain of a credulous man? or would it be——? Who could tell?

Suddenly, out of the deep silence, the clock commenced to strike. Between it and the sufferer on the bed there seemed to be an electric connection, for, with its first vibrating stroke, again his frame shuddered from head to foot, though he did not as yet awake; but at each slow, successive stroke his form shuddered as under the charge of a galvanic battery.

As the last stroke of twelve rang solemnly through the darkening room, he suddenly sprang up in a sitting posture, broad awake, with his long arms extended, and his glaring eyes fixed upon the closed door at the foot of his bed! His frame was no longer convulsed, but rigid as marble; his face was livid as that of a corpse; his mouth was open; his eyes almost bursting from their sockets; great drops of sweat started from his pallid brow, from which his dark hair bristled up with horror!

"This is a fit," whispered Colonel Shannon to Mr. Willoughby, as they gazed in consternation upon the sufferer; and both cautiously arose to go to his assistance, when Ernest Heine from the other side of the bed earnestly motioned them to keep still and wait the issue. Yielding to the greater knowledge and experience of the physician, the other gentlemen silently resumed their seats and watched the patient, from whose white and rigid lips low and almost inarticulate sounds were bursting.

"*She is coming! She is coming! Do you not hear her?*"

They listened intently, but heard nothing except the labored breathing of the stricken man.

"*Hark! She is here! She is here!*" he gasped once more.

Again they listened and looked, but no new sound or sight broke the stillness of the room.

"*She is here! She is here! On the outside of the door!*"

They looked, but the door remained quietly closed as before.

Once more they arose to approach the dying man, but Dr. Heine lifted his hand with a gesture and a look that said "For Heaven's sake be quiet!" and they relapsed into stillness.

"THERE! THERE SHE IS NOW!" shrieked the guilty man, extending his skeleton finger, and fixing his starting eyes upon the door. "*Look! behold! see her! she has come to force me to confess!*"

The eyes of all present followed the index of that ghastly finger, and, to their horror and amazement, they beheld—like a moonbeam in the darkness of the doorway——

—— *The shape or shade of Agnes Heine, palpable to sense as ever she appeared while living!* Only never living woman looked so coldly pure. Her long and flowing snow-white robe was not whiter than her still face; her fair, slender hands were crossed upon her spotless bosom; her long, black hair, parted over her calm brow, flowed gracefully down upon her white drapery; her eyes were fixed in sadness upon the eyes of her destroyer, which they seemed to hold by irresistible power, magnetized to her own.

While the gaze of the watchers were yet, as it were, frozen to this awful vision, the voice of the dying man arose in shrieks—

"You see her—you *all* see her? It is no illusion, as they said it was! You see her! you all see her as plainly as I do, don't you?"

The appalled faces of the spectators avouched as plainly as words could speak that they did.

"She has come to *me*," screamed the convulsed and agonized man—"she has come to *me*! she has come for justice! She will have justice! Well! she shall have it! Ha! who is that behind her? It is the old man! What! he, too? Look! look where he stands and shakes his aged hand on high! Look! behold, I say!"

The watchers followed his horrid gaze, but saw nothing more than the marvelous apparition of Agnes Heine, standing pale and luminous as a form of moonlight, within the doorway.

"Ha! the wound across his throat has broken out afresh! I know now it is that which makes him look so pale! How it streams with blood! How it streams! It is running down his garments! It is creeping over the floor, and curdling in pools; take care! keep out of it! or they will find the stain upon you, and say you murdered him! Away, old man! back to your grave! Why should you stretch your withered hand towards me, as if you thought I did it? You said in dying—it was Godfrey!"

"Oh, this is horrible!" gasped Honora, hiding her head upon her husband's shoulder.

Through all this raving the vision of Agnes Heine remained in unaltered beauty. But now, behold a new wonder—her perfect lips part as if an angel spoke by them in the single phrase—

"Confess and be forgiven!"

"Oh! I will! I will! You shall have justice, Agnes! you and him! him also! for death is less dreadful than this horrible punishment! Hear, all men! I murdered the old man for his hoarded gold. I put on the clothes of Godfrey Dulanie, not to criminate him, but to save my own garments from bloodstain, when I did the deed! I hid the clothes with the stolen will in the crevice of the rock—meaning to produce the will when it should seem safe to do so——"

"My God! my God, I thank Thee for this great deliverance!" ejaculated Godfrey Dulanie, in strong emotion, while Honora convulsively clasped his hand, and both sank upon their knees in gratitude and awe.

"Ha! are you satisfied now, old man?" cried the dying penitent, still addressing the unreal phantom of his own brain—"are you satisfied now? Yes! See! see! he raises his venerable hands to heaven! He bows his hoary head in token of assent—do you not note it?"

No! the amazed spectators saw nothing but the fair, luminous vision of Agnes Heine, and the dying figure of her destroyer—heard nothing but the astounding confession that criminated himself and cleared the fame of Godfrey Dulanie!

"There! he extends his reverend hands in benediction, and now he is gone! he is gone!" cried the sufferer, gazing into vacancy; then suddenly bringing down his wild eyes, he settled them upon the fair vision that remained unchanged and visible to all, as to himself—and cried—

"Ha! Agnes! you here still? So! I forget! You must have justice, too! Ah—how dark it grows!—how thick the air!—great Heaven! can this be death? Agnes! you shall have justice!—give me time, Heaven!—Agnes is innocent—I—I put the jewels in her trunk—to get her in my power,—I—I did not mean that she should go to prison—but I could not stop the course of law!—Agnes—forgive—Jesus plead—God pardon——"

The grayness of dissolution crept over the face of the dying man; his rigid form relaxed, and he fell back upon his pillow—DEAD.

Before either of the watchers could make a step towards the bed, their attention was startled by a new prodigy.

The fair spirit that had remained all this while unchanged, suddenly dropped her clasped hands, and fell, fainting as a living woman might fall, into the outstretched arms of Ernest Heine, who sprang forward to receive her.

He raised and bore—not the shade but the real living form of Agnes Heine—to the lounge, upon which he tenderly laid her.

All was in an instant confusion;—though the presence of the dead, and, perhaps, of the dying, restrained noisy demonstrations.

Dr. Heine bent anxiously over the insensible form of his bride, who, under his skillful treatment, soon breathed again, opened her sweet eyes, and looked around in surprise and fear.

"Be calm, dear one; there is no more need of concealment; trust me, and lie quietly, while I give our friends here one word of explanation," said Ernest Heine, arranging her pillow. And then, turning to the astonished and wondering spectators, he said—

"Friends, a few words will explain this seeming prodigy. The apparent death of Agnes in the prison was a severe attack of epilepsy, brought on by her previous excessive suffering. When her body was given up to me for burial, I watched beside her coffin all night in my study. A little after midnight I discovered in the supposed corpse signs of life.

"In a delirium of newly-inspired hope, I lifted her from the coffin and laid her on the lounge, used all proper remedies, and after an hour of anxious effort, I succeeded in restoring her to consciousness. I filled her empty coffin with a billet of wood, and screwed down the lid to avoid detection.

"The same night I conveyed Agnes to a safe retreat in the mountains, where I thought she would remain in peace, until I could find means to carry her to a foreign country.

"But her shattered nervous system could not soon be restored to health. Her epileptic fits returned, attended with the alarming feature of somnambulism. Despite my greatest precaution, and during the times of my necessary absence, she frequently arose and walked in her sleep.

"At such seasons, the one idea of her life—the clearing of her fame—seemed to be the motive power of her unconscious action. This involuntary impulse no doubt it was that led her, night after night, to the chamber of her persecutor.

"I need not tell you, however, that while asleep, Agnes is totally unconscious, and wholly irresponsible for her actions; that when awake, she has no recollection of anything that has passed during her state of somnambulency; and that at this moment she is perfectly ignorant of the momentous events that have just occurred in this chamber, and to which she has been so important a party."

Then turning to Governor Sterne, the young man bowed with great deference, and continued—

"And I would now most respectfully suggest to the executive, that in view of all he has heard and seen to-night, his excellency can no longer hesitate as to his course in regard to two guiltless individuals most unjustly convicted."

Governor Sterne bowed stiffly with the air of one who did not choose to be prompted, and after a short delay, he arose, requested Colonel Shannon and Mr. Willoughby to attend him, and beckoned black John to show him into the library, where he could be supplied with lights and writing materials.

Ernest Heine seated himself beside the couch of his young wife, who under his soothing hands, had sunk into a sweet, natural sleep.

The good Father Marauty knelt at the foot of the bed, to pray for the soul of the departed; while Farmer Hayhurst, standing on the right side, closed the eyes, tied up the chin, and straightened the limbs of the body.

Godfrey and Honora, still attended by the sheriff and his officers, sat side by side, with their hands clasped together, and their hearts filled with solemn gratitude for their own deliverance from deep affliction; but not unmixed with compassion for the sinful soul now gone to its last tremendous account.

Thus, in silence they remained, until the door was opened by Mr. Willoughby, who entered bearing two documents, whose import might be easily surmised, and which he placed in the hands of the sheriff.

After a cursory examination of the papers, that worthy officer arose, and, cordially offering his hand to his prisoner, said:

"I am happy to announce, sir, that my official relations with you are ended. Permit me to wish you much happiness in the renewed life, so justly bestowed upon you."

Mr. Dulanie bowed gravely and silently, his heart being too full for speech.

"*Godfrey!*" cried Honora in a thrilling voice, dropping her head upon his shoulder; but for her sovereign self-control she must have fainted.

"I have now to inform you, my friends, that Colonel Shannon prays the presence of his neice and nephew in the library," said Mr. Willoughby, with a grave smile, waving his hand towards the door.

"Come, dear Honora," said Mr. Dulanie, drawing the arm of his wife within his own, and following the clergyman who led the way from the room.

They crossed the hall and entered the sumptuous library that was situated on the same floor.

There they found Colonel Shannon seated alone at the writing-table.

As they entered, the old gentleman arose and advanced towards them, holding out both his hands; grasping in each a hand of theirs, he said, in deep emotion:

"Godfrey! Honora! I can scarcely hope that you will pardon me, for that I also yielded credence to the circumstantial evidence that convicted an innocent man. It will take time to prove to you how deeply I regret that error."

"An error shared by the judge, jury, and executive, sir. We could scarcely expect you to be wiser than they," replied Mr. Dulanie, gravely.

"And you pardon me?" said the old man, squeezing his hand, then turning to his neice, he inquired:

"And you, Honora?"

"Uncle, I *love* you," replied that sweet-lipped lady.

"See!" said the old gentleman, in a lightened tone, as he turned to the centre table, "I have lost no time in doing something to atone for my involuntary injustice," and taking up a document, he placed it in the hands of Godfrey Dulanie, saying:

"There is an instrument of writing, Mr. Dulanie, that will put your wife in immediate possession of her fortune."

Godfrey, with a grave and silent bow, received the papers.

"Let me also remind you, Mr. Dulanie, that, as heir-at-law, both of your late grandfather and your just departed relative, you stand once more in the home of your fathers—the undisputed master of Farquier."

Godfrey Dulanie started. It really had not occurred to him that he had entered upon his patrimonal estate; now a flush of joy overspread his fine face.

Honora, keenly sympathizing with him—now in joy as once in sorrow—clasped his hand and smiled up into his face.

"Let me also congratulate you, my friends," said Mr. Willoughby, "not on your restored fortune, but on your vindicated honor!"

"Congratulate me," said Godfrey Dulanie, in a deep and thrilling tone, as he took the hand of his wife and turned upon her lovely face a look of immortal love—"congratulate me upon something *surer* than the riches that may 'take to themselves wings and fly away'—*purer* than the worldly honor that the breath of an insensate multitude may give or take away; congratulate me on *her* whose 'price is above rubies,' who alone of all the world remained true to me in the hour of my utmost need, whose faith never failed me in the darkest of days—my Honora, my bride of one evening, my wife for all eternity; above all goods congratulate me for her, as above all blessings for her, I thank God."
THE END.

A USEFUL LESSON.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"I don't like old people," said a thoughtless young girl, "they are either cross, disagreeable or ugly."

"You have been unfortunate in your chances of observation," replied a lady, sitting near her.

"It may be so, but I speak, at least, from experience. All the old people it has been my fortune, or misfortune, to meet, have been cross in temper and repulsive in appearance. I have an old aunt, who is always associated in my mind with the Witch of Endor. From a child I have had a perfect horror of her. I doubt if she ever gave utterance to a kind or uncomplaining word in her life."

"You must not judge all by this aunt, my young friend," said the lady. "There are handsome and agreeable old people in the world, and not a few of them, either, but many. Age does not necessarily sour the temper, nor mar the countenance. There is such a thing as 'growing old gracefully,' and the number of those who are thus advancing along the paths of life, I am pleased to say, are increasing yearly. I happen to have an old aunt, also, but, so far from being a second Witch of Endor, I heard a gentleman, not many days ago, remark, in speaking of her, 'Why, every wrinkle in Mrs. Elder's face is a line of beauty.' And so it is; for every wrinkle there was born of patient endurance, or unselfish devotion to the good of another. I look at her dear old face often and often, and say to myself, 'Now, is not she handsome?'"

"I should really like to see your aunt," said the young girl, half skeptically.

"Come to my house to-morrow, and we will pay her a visit," answered the lady. "It will do both of us good."

"Thank you for the invitation. I will certainly call."

The next day came, and the young lady was early at the house of Mrs. Barton.

"Glad to see you, Kate," was the pleasant greeting she received. "We are to call on my aunt Elder, I believe."

"Yes; you promised to introduce me to an old lady who, so far from being cross and ugly, is sweet-tempered and beautiful. The sweet temper I can imagine, but not a face wrinkled and beautiful at the same time."

"You shall see," was answered.

"Ah, good morning, Mary," said a low, but very pleasant and cheerful voice, as the two ladies entered the small but neat and orderly sitting-room of Mrs. Elder.

"My friend, Miss Kate Williams," said Mrs. Barton, presenting the young lady.

Mrs. Elder laid her knitting upon a table, close to her open Bible, and rising, took the hand of Miss Williams, looking earnestly into her young face as she did so, and smiling so sweet a welcome, that Kate did not see a wrinkle, for the beautiful light that shone from the old lady's placid countenance.

"I am always pleased to see young faces," said Mrs. Elder, "and to feel the warmth of young hearts."

"How are you to-day, aunt?" inquired Mrs. Barton.

"Not so well in body as when you were here last. I sleep but poorly."

Mrs. Elder smiled as if she were telling of enjoyments, and then added—

"But this is only one of the penalties of age. I knew it must come, and long ago made up my mind to be patient and enduring. These are some of the light afflictions, lasting but for a moment, which, if borne in Christian meekness, help to work out for us that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, to which the Apostle refers in one of his sublime passages."

Miss Williams looked at the old lady half wonderingly.

"Always doing something, Aunt Elder," said Mrs. Barton, placing her hand upon the half-knit yarn stocking, which the old lady had put aside as she rose to take the hand of Miss Williams. "Knitting, I suppose, has grown into a kind of habit. The act brings its own reward. It is your pleasant pastime."

"No, child, not my pleasant pastime, but my useful employment," answered Mrs. Elder. "I can't do much in this world for other people, still I can do a little, and I am thankful for the privilege; for I don't believe it is possible for any body to be happy who is not engaged in some useful employment. I manage to keep the children of half a dozen poor families in warm stockings for the winter, and that is something added to the common stock of human comfort."

The eyes of Miss Williams were now fixed intently upon the old lady's age-marked features. Wrinkles went curving about her cheeks, her lips, and chin, and wrinkles planted themselves deeply upon her forehead. Gray hairs were visible beneath her cap-border; her calm eyes lay far back in their hollow sockets; the symmetry of her mouth was gone; and yet it seemed to the young girl, as she gazed at her wonderingly, as if every wrinkle in that aged face were indeed a line of beauty!

"But you must have a surer foundation for happiness than knitting stockings?" said Mrs. Barton.

The old lady seemed thoughtful for a moment. She then said, with sweet impressiveness—

"There is only one foundation upon which we can rest and find happiness, and that is God's love in the heart. The great question for us all is, How to obtain that love? It will not come at our command. We cannot drag it down from Heaven. We cannot find it, search we ever so diligently. God's love is God-given; and he bestows it only upon those who first have neighborly love. This is that higher love's receptacle in the human heart. First, love of the neighbor—then, love of good, which is Divine love in the soul, the sure foundation for abiding happiness. So you see, Mary, the value of even knitting stockings to one like me. It is useful work, and that, as the old monk said, is worship.

Miss Williams could not withdraw her eyes from the old lady's face. Its beauty and its goodness seemed to fascinate her. She was a girl of quick feelings and some enthusiasm. Suddenly rising from the chair she had taken a few moments before, she came forward, and, stooping over Mrs. Elder, kissed her, almost reverently, on the forehead, saying, as she did so—

"May I be like you when I grow old—every wrinkle in my face a line of beauty!"

"Grow old in goodness, my dear young friend!" answered Mrs. Elder, taking her hand tightly within her own, and speaking with emotion—for the young girl's sudden speech had stirred her feelings to an unusual depth—"Grow old in goodness, through the discipline of self-denial and the gentle leadings of neighborly love. It is the only path that conducts to a peaceful old age."

"Thanks for the lesson you have taught me," said Miss Williams, when she again clasped the hand of Mrs. Elder in parting. "I will try to grow old, as the years pass inevitably onwards, in the better way that you have walked. And may my last days be, like yours, my best days, and radiant with light, shining down from the better world."

"I am a sceptic no longer"—she was now in the street with Mrs. Barton; "beauty and age are not incompatible."

"But the beauty of age," replied Mrs. Barton, "is unlike the beauty of youth; the one is natural, the other spiritual and celestial. The one is of the earth—earthly, the other is of the heavens—heavenly. An evil soul gradually mars the face, until every lineament becomes repulsive; but a soul of beauty continually recreates the countenance, and covers it with living beauty."

HUSBANDS' MISTAKES.

We make a great mistake in our treatment of our wives; as lovers we are worshipful, as husbands we are too often bearish to them. We run into extremes each way. But why, after paying a woman the highest compliment we can, we are, when she has accepted it, to consider her exempt from the attentions due to her sex, we could never understand. Is it that "familiarity breeds contempt?" In that case, she also should lose her former exalted opinion of us. Politeness, by its silken fetters, restrains many an evil feeling: it is a bad plan to throw them off entirely. We need not be as ceremonious as if with utter strangers, but we had better keep up our good manners; it pleases the wife and does us no harm. Last year we would not have sworn at her "strumming on the piano," nor told her she did not know what she was talking about—why should we do it now? At least, let us "school ourselves before folks;" there is no occasion to mortify her foolishly; women will better bear downright ill-usage than this kind of lowering treatment. Let a man respect his wife, treat her like a lady, and she will most commonly act up to his standard. The woman who is constantly put down, becomes incapable of acting for herself on an emergency; she has no confidence in her own judgment; she distracts you by her irresolutions, or occasionally obstinately adheres to some ill-advised line of conduct, because your continual opinionative contradictions have ceased to have any weight with her. Once she learns to say, "Oh, when I propose anything, Mr. —— will go the contrary way," there is an end to your domestic comfort.

The ladies, however, sweet creatures! are not *faultless; too frequently, when the lover is gained, they forget to use the same winning blandishments* with the husband. Now this is bad policy. As they rub up their steel grates and mahogany, so should they keep their own charms bright. It is their duty to study their husbands' tastes, and dress as becomingly as they can, with proper economy; when they cannot have change, they can always have perfect neatness; a little extra smartness for his return from business, that he may feel he is yet of importance to them. His eye need not be vexed by slatternly dowdiness at his breakfast table, or when "nobody's there;" depend on it, ladies, the best-tempered, humblest-minded man in the world rebels when thus plainly told he is "nobody." You did not think him so once.

INDEPENDENT.

"It is immaterial to me—I am indifferent to the feelings or opinions of other people. I am entirely self-contained, and find it needless to look without myself for satisfaction or happiness."

Really? Why, here is a wonderful being! No wonder that one who overheard this regal assertion turned with wide-eyed astonishment to gaze upon the speaker.

The marvel was in no wise lessened by the fact that the speaker was a woman. She was young and fair, and clad in the garb of wealth. Fearless and self-reliant she did indeed seem, and pride was in all her motions and expressions.

"Ah! poor child!" thought the listener, "clearly the lesson of life is all unread by you, but neither wealth nor pride nor beauty can excuse you from that reading. You will yet learn to know—and it may be that the knowledge will be harshly and bitterly imparted—that no created being can be either good or happy in, or of, or to himself. There is, in nature, no provision made for such a thing; and who can stand aloof from nature's control? Surely not a woman.

"And you—strong and proud young beauty that you are—will soon begin to droop, and long to be supported. On the march of life there is not *one* who can *long* go cheerfully and prosperously on alone. Hand to hand, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, men must move forward, or they grow weary and faint-hearted all too soon. Beware, then, how you carry yourself, now that the audacity and presumption of youth is in all your fermenting blood; keep down the arrogance that is tempting you to walk so as to shake off from you the gentle dews of love. Let not your pride and self-dependence shut up the hearts of those who offer you affection."
G. H.

PRIDE.—A proud man is a fool in fermentation, swelling and boiling like a porridge-pot. He sets his features like an owl, to swell and seem bigger than he is. He is troubled with an inflammation of self-conceit, that renders him the man of pasteboard, and a true buckram knight. All his upper stories are crammed with masses of spongy substances, occupying much space, as feathers and cotton will stuff cushions better than things of more compact and solid proportion.

APT COMPARISON.—A soul, like an instrument of music, should be well tuned to meet the various strains the hand of destiny may call from its thrilling chords; firmly, yet sweetly, should its tones ring out, of whatever character they are; strong but sweet music still should a God-strengthened spirit yield beneath the touch of sorrow or adversity, as sweet, though it may be sadder, as in its days of brightest power.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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OUR NEW VOLUME.

At the commencement of the last volume of the Ledger, just one year ago, we remarked:

> We commence our new volume this week under more flattering and prosperous circumstances than ever fell to the lot of any newspaper publisher. This, we know, is saying a great deal, but the FACTS warrant the assertion. New and eminent contributors, whose names will shortly be announced, have been engaged, and everything that the liberal expenditure of money could do to make A GREAT AND A GOOD PAPER has been done.

On *this* occasion we have only to say, with thankfulness, that while the circulation of the Ledger has been increased by tens of thousands, and our general prosperity advanced beyond our hopes, our sense of responsibility and our determination to maintain the acknowledged excellence, the unequaled attractiveness, and the high moral tone of the Ledger, have increased in like proportion, and that whatever ample means and enlarged experience will enable us to do to enhance the excellence and usefulness of the Ledger during the present year, will be done cheerfully and vigorously.

Fanny Fern sends us "a word of cheer" in a characteristic paragraph, for *this* new volume, as she did for the two preceding ones, the exquisite humor and happy execution of which we are certain will be as much relished by the general reader as its friendly spirit and kindly motives are by us.

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TO OLD READERS AND NEW.

The success of the New York Ledger has become a matter of history. It is read in ferry-boats, cars, and omnibusses. School-masters search their pupils' pockets for it, and lay it on the desk of authority until geography and grammar shall have had their proper share of attention. Mammas at home put it in an *unfindable* place, until bewitched daughters shall have mended the holes in their gloves and stockings. School-boys tumble off the sidewalk reading it, as they go tardily through the streets to spelling-books and ferules. Hackmen allow their horses to nibble at ladies' bonnets in passing, while they sit on the box, deep in the Ledger's fascinating contents. Working-girls will carry it home, though they give a shilling less for their bonnet-ribbons. Wives search the tombs of their husbands' pockets, and spring at the delinquent with a reproachful—"*No* Ledger!"

In this state of things, what's a "panic?"—what's a dozen panics? The New York Ledger has outridden them all like a gallant ship, with all sails spread, dashing her spray in the faces of the small fry till they were glad to bob under water. Wives and husbands, children and parents, old maids and bachelors, find in it improvement, amusement, and consolation. Its contributors are liberally paid—the Ledger horses out-trot every nag on the road—(one is named "Fanny !")—and so we enter on our fourteenth volume.

Fanny Fern.

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

We entirely sympathize with the movements now being made for the better observance of the Sabbath. And our sympathies in this respect are not the result of sectarianism, bigotry or intolerance, save intolerance of evil-breeding irreligion. The history of the human race has sufficiently proved that man, wherever he is not a social and moral outcast, is a religious being, and is influenced by his religion, more than by any other single agency, in all his actions and relations. The character of his religion is, therefore, of the first importance. We do not, in this age and community, consider it necessary to argue the superiority of Christianity over any and all other systems of religion, either in spirit or in form. To raise a query on this point, would be to insult the intelligence of Christendom.

If France demonstrated, by the godless orgies of her revolution, that no civilized State can exist without a God-revering and man-loving religion, the experience of Christendom has proved the pre-eminence of the Christian faith as a conservator of morality, order, intelligence and brotherhood, and has proved, also, that those nations and communities of Christendom are most intelligent, moral, and in every way prosperous, which are most reverent of the Christian institutes, one of the very chief of which is the Sabbath. Aye, and far older than Christianity is the stern commandment of God himself, through Moses, "Remember the Sabbath-day, and keep it holy." Of the whole Decalogue, this is made second only to the command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Upon these two commandments alone, the Almighty has deigned to reason with man, the more thoroughly to impress them. Of the Sabbath God has said: "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work: but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made Heaven and earth, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it." We have quoted this commandment, not that we doubt the familiarity of our readers with it, but because it cannot be re-produced and repeated too often. In no respect did Christ modify it. Assuming, then, not only the divine institution of the Sabbath, but also that its observance has, by all experience, been proved conducive of man's highest spiritual and temporal good, what is the duty of society's guardians with respect to it? To our mind their duty is plain. Take our own community, for instance: a great majority of the whole body are disposed to a proper observance of the Sabbath, solely from religious and sanatory considerations; the due restraint of the otherwise disposed minority is the legitimate business of the civil authorities. If these lack power under existing statutes, to this end, it is the business of our legislators to enlarge their powers.

We have no hesitation in affirming the absolute right of society to enforce its will in this matter, with a strong hand. The observance of the Sabbath is a Christian, and not a sectarian requirement. Our whole government professes to be founded on Christianity, and if so, it is its clear province to see that the Christian institutes—independent of sectarianism—are respected within its borders. Not only public sentiment, but the public welfare, demands thus much. It is all nonsense to talk about laws for the observance of the Sabbath infringing upon a man's natural rights. Save as a solitary savage, man has no rights inconsonant with the greatest good of the society in which he lives. As to conscience, those who are impelled by it to Sabbath-breaking, in this country and age, deserve to have their whole morality questioned. We are for the observance of the Sabbath in a Christian spirit, whatever means may be required to enforce it.

DRESSMAKERS.

One portion of the inhabitants of New York, and the portion standing most in need of a little fresh air, to recruit their exhausted frames, are denied this relief—the dressmakers and sewing girls. Oh! would the rich and fashionable dames, for the adornment of whose persons these poor creatures toil through the weary day, and not unfrequently through the long night, reflect at how dear a price the graceful robe that displays the elegance of their forms so well, is obtained! could they behold the heavy eyes, the pallid cheeks, the attenuated frames, and care-worn brows of the poor workers on the robes to be made in a few hours, they would then combine together, and resolve to use their all-powerful influence to change a system introduced through the desire of meeting the unreasonable demands for dresses, to be made up at notices too short to admit of their being finished, except at the sacrifice of the sleep of those who work on them; and their consciences would be lightened of the weight of their having, for the gratification of their vanity, exacted that which could only be accomplished at so heavy a penalty to the maker. American women are not unfeeling—they are only sometimes forgetful. The fair creature, whose delicate throat is encircled by oriental pearls, thinks not of the risk of those who dive beneath the wave to seize the costly gems. Could she but witness the operation, how would she tremble! nay, we are not sure that even the warmest admirer of pearls would not thenceforth abjure them. So, when ladies see themselves attired in becoming robes, they reflect not on the weary hours of toil the manufacture of them has occasioned; if they did—and we earnestly hope they will—they would soon do all in their power to lighten the labor, and to ameliorate the condition, of the dressmaker.

THEN AND NOW.

Time was when an Alderman was a reputable character—when he represented the civic virtues of the community—when he was chosen for his fitness, and was proud to "do the State some service"—when his staff of office was a treasured heritage among his children—when on his daily life and on his tomb-stone was written—"an honest man"—when, indeed, the worst that was said of him (and that in an innocent, jocular way) was that he had

> "A fair round belly with good capon lined."

That time was *then*. Now, an Alderman is about the most disreputable character one can name—he represents the vices of the community—he is chosen for anything but his fitness, and is proud to disgrace his office, and swindle the public; his children, even, look upon his staff and badges with contempt; *on his daily life and on his tomb-stone is written—"a thief," and the best that can be said of him is that "he didn't steal more because there was no more to steal."* Dr. Johnson's definition of patriotism, as "something in a man's breeches pocket," is fully illustrated by a modern Alderman. He knows no service that doesn't consult his pocket—the income thereof. Of old he worked for public good and personal glory. Now he works for pay, for clear cash; and if an honest Mayor puts on the screws so that he cannot steal a fortune, he cries out for a fat salary. Oh! for the days of honest, old, rotund, turtle-eating Aldermen:

> "Are they gone, are they gone forever?
> Will they never more return?"

SHUN AFFECTATION.

There is nothing more beautiful in the young than simplicity of character. It is honest, frank and attractive.

How different is affectation! The simple-minded are always natural. They are, at the same time, original. The affected are never natural. And as for originality, if they ever had it, they have crushed it out and buried it from sight, utterly.

Be yourself, then, young friend! To attempt to be any body else is worse than folly. It is an impossibility to attain it. It is contemptible to try!

But suppose you *could* succeed in imitating the greatest man that ever figured in history, would that make you any the greater? By no means. You would always suffer in comparison with the imitated one, and be thought of only as the shadow of a substance—the echo of a real sound—the counterfeit of a pure coin!

Dr. Johnson aptly compared the heartless imitator—for such is he who affects the character of another—to the Empress of Russia, when she did the freakish thing of erecting a palace of ice. It was splendid and conspicuous while it lasted. But the sun soon melted it, and caused its attractions to dissolve into common water, while the humblest stone cottages of her subjects stood firm and unmarred!

Let the fabric of your character, though never so humble, be at least real. Avoid affecting the character of another, however great. Build up your own. Be what God intended you to be—*yourself*, and not somebody else. Shun affectation!

WISE PROPHETS.

Our modern "toe-rapping" prophets are a wise set; they never say the bread is buttered until they look on both sides of the slice. As an instance:—Judge Edmonds, *after* the safety of the steamship Ariel has been announced in the public press, writes to the *Evening Post* that the spirit of his nephew, who is an engineer on board the Ariel, revealed to his (the Judge's) feminine folk the safety of that vessel, several days before it was publicly known. Of course, the Judge is a man of veracity; but the incredulous will, nevertheless, ask why "his honor" did not drop a line to the *Post* before the Ariel was telegraphed. A prophecy is a prophecy, as plainly as a pike-staff is a pike-staff, but the mass of mankind are stupid enough to require that it shall *forestall the event*. Revelations that follow the telegraph and mail are considered rather stale news now-a-days. The old prophets were risky fellows—they ventured to *foretell*. To be sure, there was some reward of credit when their revelations were confirmed; but what is the use of running risks when, by waiting a little until the thing happens, one can tell all about it—and can tell right every time? Wise prophets, and safe, are these toe-rappers. They wait the event, and then reveal it.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A FEW BRIDAL THOUGHTS,

WHICH NEED MAKE NOBODY BRIDLE.

I have often wished that mothers were more sensible in their bridal outlay for their daughters. What folly to accumulate for them such loads of dresses—so surely, and so soon, to be laid aside by chameleon fashion or necessity. Give them fewer trinkets, laces, and ribbons, and instead "no end of" changes of under-clothing, which never become useless, or go out of fashion. A bride is generally furnished with everything but what she needs most. Judicious was that old lady who, soon after the marriage of a young friend, came trudging toward the handsomely furnished house of the bride, holding by the strings an apoplectic-looking calico bag. "Poor thing!" she exclaimed, after seating herself carefully in an arm-chair, and recovering her breath: "poor thing! I knew they'd never think to give you any old linen rags."

Every married woman who reads this, and who remembers being set down in a bran-new house, that smelt like a coffin ware-room, looking so dreadfully new, and formal, and unhome-like—for it takes time to get used even to one's husband—looking in vain perhaps upon the shelf that corresponds to mother's at home, for an inch of string, or a bit of old cotton or linen, or any of the homely, old, useful things, which a bride's house is sure never to contain—every married woman who reads this can appreciate the value of that bag of rags.

Of course your bridal home looks more like home while your husband is in it. When he is gone off to his business, and you sit there in your new dress—how I hate a new dress—looking round on every spick-and-span article about you—missing your brother Tom, who *did* steal your cologne, and whose foot was always in your lap for a missing gaiter button; missing your sister Matty, who was always coming into the parlor at the wrong moment, and who had a way of airing your gloves and boots without leave; missing snuffy old Mrs. Jones, who used to waddle in to dinner whenever her pointer-nose scented turtle soup; missing your dimpled baby sister;—and there you stop, and look serious; and you sit a long while without unclasping the hands which lay so idly on your knee, and the tears come into your eyes, and you seem all at once to have left girlhood a long way behind. You are happy—of course you are happy. Isn't Harry the best and dearest fellow in the world? but you think you'll just tie on your bonnet, and run down to "mother's" till it is time for him to come home to dinner; and when you kiss her—there she sits in the same old place, in the same old chair—you feel a choking in your throat, and you beg her to give you some little trifle to do for her—a handkerchief, or a ruffle to hem; and you sit right down upon the carpet at her feet, nestling as close as you can, and now and then laying your brown head in her lap. She says nothing—she knows your heart. Years ago she laid her head—now covered with silver hairs—on *her* mother's knee; and so have thousands of girls before, and so will thousands of girls to come, when the baptism of maternity floods their lustrous eyes with holy, happy tears, and sends them quivering back to the heart they once lay beneath, and whose goodness, and strength, and tenderness they never knew till that conscious moment.

To lay one's first-born fondly in "mother's" *arms!* How many happy wives have turned their pale faces to the pillow and wept that every step but "mother's" came so softly through that chamber door—that she never would look upon that little face. As if she *were* not there! As if she did not watch the gentle breathing of that little sleeper! As if she "had not charge" to keep, both you and it! As if the gentle dew of sleep did not come to you laden with her blessing. As if the holy thrill those little velvet lips sent through your breast, she did not know of, and rejoice in. Heaven were not heaven else—I, for one, must believe it.

And all this makes me think of the little Princess Royal. Poor thing—cover her with tinsel as they may, she is after all but a woman. In her far-off Berlin home, when the crown of maternity, brighter than all others, shall descend upon her girlish brow, the All-Merciful grant her that nice place to cry—a *mother's arms*—for, thank God, Victoria, though a Queen, is human. Fanny Fern.

SMOKING IN THE STREETS.

Smoking in public thoroughfares we deem one of the greatest nuisances that the public of any city can be subjected to. You can scarcely turn your face now-a-days, but some consequential young scamp with little breeding, but bountifully supplied with a metalic substance vulgarly termed *brass*, will emit the fumes of a cigar in your face, and almost suffocate you with the disagreeable odor. But we masculines could put up with the nuisance, if it were not intolerable to the feminines. It is a lamentable, a disgraceful fact, that a lady cannot pass through any of our public thoroughfares without encountering some devotee of the weed who will either cover the sidewalk with tobacco slime, or like some young volcano, puff his smoke in her face, and render the atmosphere obnoxious. If people will smoke, let them do it in such places as will not render it offensive to others—let them puff as much as they please on their own premises; but let them not drive their smoke down the throats of the anti-smoking community. The editor of the Ledger does not use tobacco in any shape—he neither smokes, chews, nor snuffs. We are aware, however, that besides scamps, young loafers, and consequential brats, who have hardly entered their *teens*, there is a large portion of the respectable community who use tobacco, and derive considerable pleasure from a cigar; but *they* seldom, if ever, smoke in the public thoroughfares or puff in ladies' faces. They either resort to some unfrequented locality, a smoking room, their own yard, or in some place where they will not enjoy their pleasure at the expense of their neighbors. It is quite different though with the inveterate lovers of tobacco in *low life*—with the rowdy, loafing portion of the community who while away their spare hours by the use of the weed—those boisterous, noisy young men whose taste is thus portrayed by an unknown rhymer evidently of their own school:

> "We three brothers be, all in one cause,
> Bill puffs, Jim snuffs, and I chaws."

We do not believe with Mr. Greeley of the Tribune that none but blackguards smoke—that is too general a denunciation, and we are afraid that the man who expresses himself in such a coarse way is not remarkable for the propriety or the elegance of his own behavior. There *are* gentlemen—refined and intelligent—who smoke and smoke freely; but they do not do it in the parks and streets. *They* have some regard for the comfort and the rights of others—they feel that they should do as they would be done by, and consequently they do not "puff" in the faces of ladies and our citizens generally.

WRANGLERS.

Mr. Addison meant it for high praise when he said, of a certain personage, that he did not know what it was, in practice, to wrangle on indifferent points. We fear this could not be said, truthfully, of some in our day who pass for "great men" with the multitude.

The name of the wranglers is legion in most communities. They are found everywhere engaged in disputation. It is the only element in which they seem contented to live, and move, and have their being. They do not satisfy themselves with the opportunities afforded by those useful institutions, the debating societies, or even with the courts of law, when they happen to have the fortune to find a field for their war of words therein. To the contrary, they make their own opportunities. In season, or out of season, they do this. The social circle is rendered discordant and boisterous by their disputations, while the very streets are made sonorous by the persistent egotism of their untimely clatter. There is no escaping an argument with them. Ever ready themselves, they have no consideration for, or patience with, any slowness of speech to which you may happen to be either absolutely or comparatively addicted. They are surprised that you are not always ready to "argue the point." *They* are always ready—in their own sense of readiness—to give you reasons and shades of reasons. Like the wrangler described in Hudibras, they can "divide a hair 'twixt south and southwest side."

Mere wranglers seldom promote the development or acceptance of truth. They mostly hinder these desirable results wherever they practice their art.

In the English Cambridge the title of wrangler is one of honor, the "senior wrangler" being the student who bears away the palm from the Senate House. As the word is understood in common life, the whole tribe of wranglers, whether senior or junior, are nothing but private pests and public nuisances.

NEVER DESPAIR.

"While there's life there's hope," is an old adage, therefore never despair. The prospect may be gloomy, the sky clouded, the face of fortune averted, yet never despair. The worst circumstances have been surmounted, the greatest perils passed, by enduring energy and faith—faith in the future, that there must or might come a brighter turn of destiny's wheel. It is always darkest just before day-dawn; there is never a cloud but there is light behind it, and never a thunderbolt or a tempest but the atmosphere is made purer thereby. So with our lives; overclouded and stormy they may be, but it is either of our calling and for our dispersement, or it is the work of a providence wiser than we, as we shall see, if we will only buffet the gale out. Despair is an impulse; it is a token of our superiority to the brutes that perish that we listen to reason, and reason connects life, in all its moods, with duty. Duty calls us to struggle and to submit—to submit to the order of Providence, and yet struggle to achieve the highest thought that is in us. Life is given us, not to be cut short or laid down at our pleasure. Virtue is born of doing and forbearing, and heroism oftenest achieves through suffering. Heroes were cheap if victory were fore-ordained and never-failing; but our human record marks him the greatest hero who could turn defeat to victory. Fabius conquered by retreating—Washington was not disconcerted because he could not always "forward march." A less wise and heroic man would have halted where he advanced, fallen back where he stood firm, and despair where he gathered fresh hope. In whatever strait, let us do whatever manhood and duty bid, and we shall conquer—aye, conquer, even though we fall. Lawrence felt the true inspiration when he sent forth his death-cry, "Don't give up the ship!"

NATIONAL DEBTS.

Has one generation the right to bind, oppress, or unduly obligate succeeding generations? What is the moral limit in such matters? We have frequently pondered the question while considering the condition of some of the European States. The safeguard of Britain against violent revolutions, is said to be her frightful incubus of national debt, whose interest taxes the sweat and blood of millions, generation after generation. Much of this debt—the principal of which never will or can be paid—accrued from unjust and ignoble wars, and not a little from the dissoluteness of a government scarcely responsible to the people. The sustainment of privileged classes entailed some of it. It would be easy to show, by an examination of her history, that two-thirds of England's enormous debt was not created by popular will, nor in answer to public want. The wretched war upon her American colonies, against her sober sense, and in spite of the protests of her better advisers, is one example of a huge bill of costs saddled upon England's generations—through all time, if they will stand it. And that, too, without consulting their will, their profit or their honor. Now, is it fair or just that millions should toil for ages to pay interest on such debts as these? It is plain that all expenditures for the general good ought to be a lien upon succeeding generations, in proportion to the benefits conferred. Society could not otherwise exist in an organized form. But it does strike us that there is a limit to obligation on this point—that the people of to-day are not, by sound morality, bound to sweat and bleed to atone for the despotism, injustice, and profligacy of the past. We object to all such vassalage of the living to the dead.

A GOOD MOVEMENT

> Mayor Tiemann said that he had been frequently called upon to provide policemen for different places of worship where boys and rowdies were in the habit of making a disturbance. He therefore moved that the captains be instructed to allow their men to attend at such places of worship as required it, when consistent with their other duties—which motion was carried.

The above is from a report of recent proceedings of the Police Commissioners. We are glad our new mayor, among his many measures of reform, has taken hold of the Sunday nuisances, one of the chief of which for years past has been this gathering of rowdies around church doors and at the street corners. If Mayor Tiemann will but put an end to these gatherings, and close the Sunday theatres, concert-rooms, dance-houses, etc., etc., he will be entitled to the gratitude of every friend of morality and order. He has bravely begun a good work, and may he have every encouragement from the virtuous portion of the community to carry it to perfection. Already vice and impudence stalk our streets less boldly, and the signs are that the good name of our noble city, so long disgraced, is in the sure process of redemption. Of all the signs, this disposition to enforce a decent observation of the Sabbath, is the most gratifying.

☞ A cobbler in Mobile, who also professes to teach music, has the following sign on his door:—

> "Delighted task to mend the tender boot,
> And teach the young idea how to flute."

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

How inconsistent are our notions of morality. No decent man would open a letter not addressed to him, but honest men will not scruple to open a book under the same circumstances. Colton's Lacon has gone through a great many editions, and yet it is addressed simply "*To those who think.*" Had the author substituted for these words—"those who think they are thinking," the book might not have had a tenth part so extensive a sale, though it would have been directed to a ten times larger class. He showed address in his address.

Flowers are not trifles, as one might know if he would only think how much pains God has taken with them everywhere: not one unfinished, not one bearing the traces of brush or pencil. Fringing the eternal borders of mountain winter, gracing the pulseless breast of the old, gray granite—everywhere they are humanizing. Murderers do not often wear roses in their button-holes. Villains seldom train vines over cottage doors.

When people, old and young, wore different dresses according to their age, they naturally adapted their deportment and conversation to their attire, which tended still further to produce individual consistency and general variety. As old and young now wear the same habiliments, there is as little difference in their manners as in their coats—a sameness which must be wrong in one direction, and may be in both.

In musing upon the wonders of steam, we have often thought it strange that there should slumber in yonder tranquil pond a power so tremendous that, could we condense and direct its energies, it might cleave the solid earth, and yet so gentle that it may be governed and made to perform its stupendous miracles by a child.

A British paper says that the American government is devouring our people's substance piece-meal. The British government will never devour the substance of its subjects in that way. "Won't that boa-constrictor bite me?" said a small boy to a showman. "Oh no, boy, he never bites—he swallows his wittles whole."

A woman can never have too much learning to be agreeable, if she be careful to retain so much female delicacy as not to become a pedant. Somebody once remarked that, no matter how blue a lady's stockings may be, if the petticoats are long enough to cover them.

Vanity, like laudanum and other poisonous medicines, is beneficial in small, though injurious in large quantities. No man, who is not pleased with himself, can please others, for it is the belief of his own grace that makes him graceful and gracious.

If in any of the places where chair is pronounced "cheer," a large, fat congressman comes into a public assemblage, is it or is it not polite for those present to cry out—"Three cheers for our member of Congress!"

An offensive correspondent tells us that he is obliged to curtail his communications. His communications and himself are very well matched—the one curtailed and the other cur-headed.

A certain editor, who is a common or uncommon villifier of character, says he is in want of small change. Well, he is now a slanderer—let him turn foot-pad: he will then be able to boast of the smallest change imaginable.

A schoolmaster in Wisconsin, named Harp, whipped a little girl so cruelly that she died in four weeks. That harp should be hung upon a willow, or some other sort of tree.

A certain writer boasts that he directs all his shots at error. It is all that he has to shoot at, for he never gets within gun-shot of truth.

An adventurer recently made quite a large speculation in our city by extensive operations on time—he stole twenty or thirty watches.

"Who's there?" said a patrol to a passing figure, one dark night. "It's I, patrol, don't be afraid," kindly replied an old woman.

The laws of usury punish a man for making as much as he can of his money, although he is freely allowed to make as much money as he can.

It has been remarked as a singular fact that when people come to what are called *high* words, they generally use very *low* ones.

A preacher, walking through a grave-yard and reading the epitaphs, said—"Here lie the dead, and here the living lie."

"There was a time when I almost thought that your wife had no tongue at all." "Yes; but 'tis very long since."

We may always joke when we please, if we are always careful to please when we joke.

We recently had a fine smooth-bore gun. We merely left it exposed over night, and it was *rifled*.

A fine coat may cover a fool, but never conceals one.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A married man of Bloomington, Illinois, recently went to the office of the "Woman's Protective Emigration Society" in that place, to select a servant girl from among a company of seventy, who had just arrived from New York. The superintendent took him into the room where they were assembled, and asked if any one would accompany the "married man" home as a "hired girl;" whereupon a modest-looking woman stepped forward and said: "Yes, I will go with Mr. ———. I have lived with him before. *I am his wife.*" The scenes that followed there and at the miserable man's residence were indescribable, his deceived second wife being more indignant than his first.

An avalanche recently rushed down from some high land upon the farm of Elisha Murray, in the town of Mentville, Maine, with such force as to gully out a path four or five feet deep, and forty or fifty wide, carrying away fences and stone walls, and dashing against Mr. Murray's house with such violence as to break in the doors and windows, and hurl Mrs. Murray upon the floor, dislocating her shoulder, and fracturing both of her arms.

A young woman of Wheeling, Virginia, whose lover tried to play her false, armed herself with a pistol, called at the faithless swain's residence at night, and gave him the choice to go with her at once to a clergyman to get married, or to die on the spot. He chose the halter rather than the pistol ball; they went to a clergyman's house, roused him up, and were duly married.

Captain Durham, of the American barque "Adriatic," who was imprisoned in Marseilles, and his vessel attached by the French authorities, to secure the payment of an unjust judgment obtained against him in a French court, who afterwards escaped with his vessel, and was recaptured, has *again* escaped, and for good.

Two flatboatmen on the Mississippi got into a fight on their boat a little below Memphis, and while clenched rolled off the boat into the river, and sunk, still fighting. As they did not rise to the surface, it is supposed that they held on to their savage gripe and drowned, rather than forego their thirst for vengeance.

The various "gift enterprises" of this city are disappearing one after another, as the rascality of their managers is found out. It is not probable that any intelligent person will hereafter send his money to these swindlers, for their "gift books," "gift newspapers," "gift pencils," &c. The Distict Attorney, we understand, is after some of them.

The earthquake which recently shook up Naples and vicinity in such an alarming manner, seems to be on its travels. It has already reached Thuratz, in the Carpathian mountains, and shaken the houses about the ears of the inhabitants.

The oldest married couple alive are supposed to be a Mr. Snyder and his wife, who reside at Burnside, Penn. He is a hundred and eleven, and she is one hundred and seven years old; they have been married about ninety-three years.

In the poor-house of Taunton, Massachusetts, there is a healthy infant, weighing over eight pounds, the father of which is but fourteen years old and the mother eleven: so says a Taunton newspaper. No wonder that such a couple are in the poor-house.

The "Republican," published at Jacksonville, Florida, says that Mrs. Winnie Lissiter, who recently died in that place, was one hundred and thirty years old—was a native of North Carolina, and was married in the "colony" many years before the Revolution.

A man named Fisher, a few days ago, in Cincinnati, leaped from the roof of a three-story building to the pavement, to escape a couple of officers who were in pursuit of him, and, strange to say, none of his bones was broken, though the *jar* gave him two black eyes.

The English and American residents in Paris are becoming so alarmed at the threatening aspect of affairs in France, as to prepare for an instant departure from that politically volcanic city.

Thomas Manheim, of St. Lawrence county, in this State, was recently killed by the falling upon him of a tree that he was chopping down.

SPINNING.

BY ALICE CARY.

All day yesterday as I spun,
The knots came into my thread,
And the sound of my wheel went "hum-a-drum,"
"Hum-a-drum," in my head!

Last night when I milked my cows and sung
Of the maiden all forlorn,
While the moon came up with a little star
A-leading by the horn;

I heard a leaping over the stile,
And a whistle blithe and gay—
The tame doves knew him, my lad, my love,
And flew up out of his way!

I knew it was tenderness for me
That made him save the moth
That had dropt into my milking pail,
And was drowning in the froth.

And when I saw the ripple of red
Over his cheek that stole,
I knew the golden jewel of love
Was sinking in his soul.

Not once have I stopt, as I spun to-day,
To pull a knot apart,
And the sound of my wheel goes "marry-me!"
"Marry-me!" in my heart.

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

[For the benefit of our *new* readers we give a synopsis of this brilliant story from the commencement up to the present instalment:—

The hero of the story, Richard Hoffman, is the son of George Hoffman, once a favorite clerk of Richard Bently, a wealthy London merchant, whose anger he incurred by marrying his only daughter, Rachel, while the merchant was absent in India. Mrs. Bently, who died before her husband returned, approved the match, and on her death-bed wrote a letter interceding for the youthful couple, which letter after her death could not be found. Mr. Bently, on returning and finding his only child married to his clerk, was greatly enraged, discarded Rachel, discharged George, whom he indirectly charged with having stolen $50,000, missing East India securities, and set them adrift in London, with five thousand dollars that belonged to Rachel in her own right, and but one true friend, Peter Mangles, the old and confidential book-keeper and clerk of the house, whose faith in George's honesty and whose love for Rachel were alike unshakeable, and who suspected Carus Kearn, Mr. Bently's nephew and George's bitter enemy, of having purloined the missing securities. George was unfortunate in business, lost his wife's money, took to drink, and by the time his son Richard had reached the age of thirteen had become a confirmed sot, and reduced his family to the verge of starvation. They lived in a low neighborhood on the Belvedere-road, where our hero made the acquaintance of Jack Manders, a boy about his own age, the nephew of Mike Silex, a returned convict, who taught Jack to steal and pick pockets for his support—a course of life which Jack abhorred but knew not how to escape from. Jack liked Richard because he never twitted him about his convict uncle, and could not be persuaded to steal. One night as Richard rushed forth into the streets to secure means to beg food for his mother and his little sister Mary, who were actually starving, he met Jack who, on learning Richard's desperate case, at once set about picking the pocket of an old gentleman across the street, which he did pick and then escaped, leaving Richard in the clutches of the police who seized him as Jack's accomplice. The old gentleman being favorably impressed with Richard's innocent, refined, and manly appearance, (for nothwithstanding his father's miserable career he was a manly and honest little fellow,) told the policeman to let him go with him, and carrying Richard to the house of his lawyer, Mr. Morton, gave him his choice to go off to school and be educated where his parents would know nothing about him, or to go to prison. It was a bitter alternative; but Richard, after combatting the strange old man and the lawyer bravely, finally yielded, and was taken by Mr. Morton to the school of the Rev. Oneas Brown, in the island of Jersey, agreeing not to write to his parents, or to say anything about his strange situation, even to Mr. Morton's son at the same school. All that Richard could find out about the old man was, that he was very rich, very kind, very eccentric, and very obstinate. The sudden and mysterious disappearance of Richard, and the report that he had been arrested for pocket-picking, threw his mother into a violent fever, and so shocked his father as to work a thorough reformation in him. He went to work diligently to retrieve his fortunes and his character, and his wife refusing to leave him and take up her abode with little Mary under her rich father's roof, old Peter Mangles furnished a neat little cottage for them, and assisted George to get the situation of agent and manager of the London business of Squire Thornton—a wealthy gentleman and manufacturer, who resided at his country seat, "The Elms," in the village of St. Faith's. There also lived at St. Faith's a haughty nobleman, named Sir Norman Boothroyd, the owner of Meldown Park, whose younger brother, Allen Boothroyd, had been driven off by ill-treatment, and had joined the army in India. Lady Boothroyd much feared the return or marriage of this young brother-in-law, Allen, as the father of the two boys had made certain provisions in his will which were a source of annoyance to her ladyship. Sir Norman Boothroyd was governed by his wife, a thorough vixen and an artful schemer, although in public she seemed as meek and innocent as a dove. This worthy couple have but one child, Alice, a beautiful and admirable girl, ten years old, who is much attached to William Thornton, a spirited boy of sixteen—a son of Squire Thornton. Sir Norman was intensely disliked by the tenantry, and the inhabitants of St. Faith's generally. He tried to prevent their shooting hares upon the common, and this led to a conflict one New Year's Eve, in which two of Sir Norman's hounds, and one of his keepers, named Springthorp, were killed, and also Barny Gee, a soldier who had just returned from India, and brought with him a beautiful little girl of eight or ten years, named Lillian, who was supposed to be his own child. Barny was shot by Sir Norman's men; and so great was the indignation of the people, that the Boothroyds determined to leave the place and reside in London. Lillian, the orphan, was taken to the hearts of Barny's brother, Simon, and his wife. But Lady Boothroyd having seen her, and having heard that Allen Boothroyd and his wife had died in India, and that their orphan daughter had been sent to England in charge of a soldier friend, she at once came to the conclusion that Lillian was Allen's daughter, and resolved to have her put out of the way. With the aid of Sir Norman's crafty and villainous old steward, Andrew Silex, the twin brother of Mike, the returned convict, she concocted a plan for Lillian's abduction. Having secretly learned that one Mark Rayner had fired the shot which killed Springthorp on the night of the affray, she forced him and his wife, Rose, much against their will, to steal Lillian, and carry her off to London. There she was given in charge of old Mike, with a hint from Lady Boothroyd that she would give five hundred pounds if the child should *happen* to die, and another secret and contrary hint from the steward, that if anything *should* happen to the child, he would punish Mike terribly, as she would one day be worth her weight in gold to him. Mike ill treats the poor child horribly, but Jack Manders defends her, and gives the villainous and hoary twins so much alarm by his discoveries about the child and Lady Boothroyd, that they get him seized by a press-gang, and carried off to sea. Mike then prepares to cheat all parties. He swaps Lillian for a poor consumptive child named Fan, of Lillian's own age and closely resembling her, with Fiddler Dick, another returned convict and old "pal" of Mike's, who keeps an itinerant troop of "dancing girls." He then speedily compasses Fan's death by constantly exposing her to the chill night air, and has the corpse buried as Lillian's, that he may get the five hundred pounds of Lady Boothroyd. Meanwhile Fiddler Dick, and his wife Bet who hated Lillian and got to hate Dick himself because he would not let her maltreat the poor child, go to Southampton to exhibit their dancing girls, where Bet betrays Dick into the hands of the police, and in the confusion Lillian is caught by Rose Rayner who chanced to be in the crowd, and carried by her on board a transport on the point of sailing for India with troops; Mark Rayner having enlisted in the regiment of Colonel Sir Charles Thorreau, and Rose having been engaged as waiting-maid to Lady Bell Thorreau, the colonel's wife. In a short time the transport set sail, and thus Lillian was, for a time at least, carried beyond the reach of the infuriated Bet, who was madly searching for the child, on whom she burned to vent her wrath and wreak her vengeance. This is the situation of affairs at the commencement of the following chapter.]

CHAPTER XXIV.

MIKE TRIES TO INTIMIDATE LADY BOOTHROYD.

No sooner was the funeral of little Fanny over, and everything pleasantly settled, than Mike, who had carefully calculated his proceedings, began to make arrangements for an interview with Lady Boothroyd. Being unable to write, and far too cautious to employ any one to do so for him, it was necessary to see her himself.

With the prospect of five hundred pounds before him, and by far the greater portion of the sum he had already received still in hand, the returned convict considered that he could prudently afford some outlay on the occasion; and he proceeded to order a suit of clothes, in order to appear respectable.

By a caprice, which had a sly touch of humor in it, he directed them to be made as nearly like the steward's as he could describe them, and even went so far as to copy his white cravat.

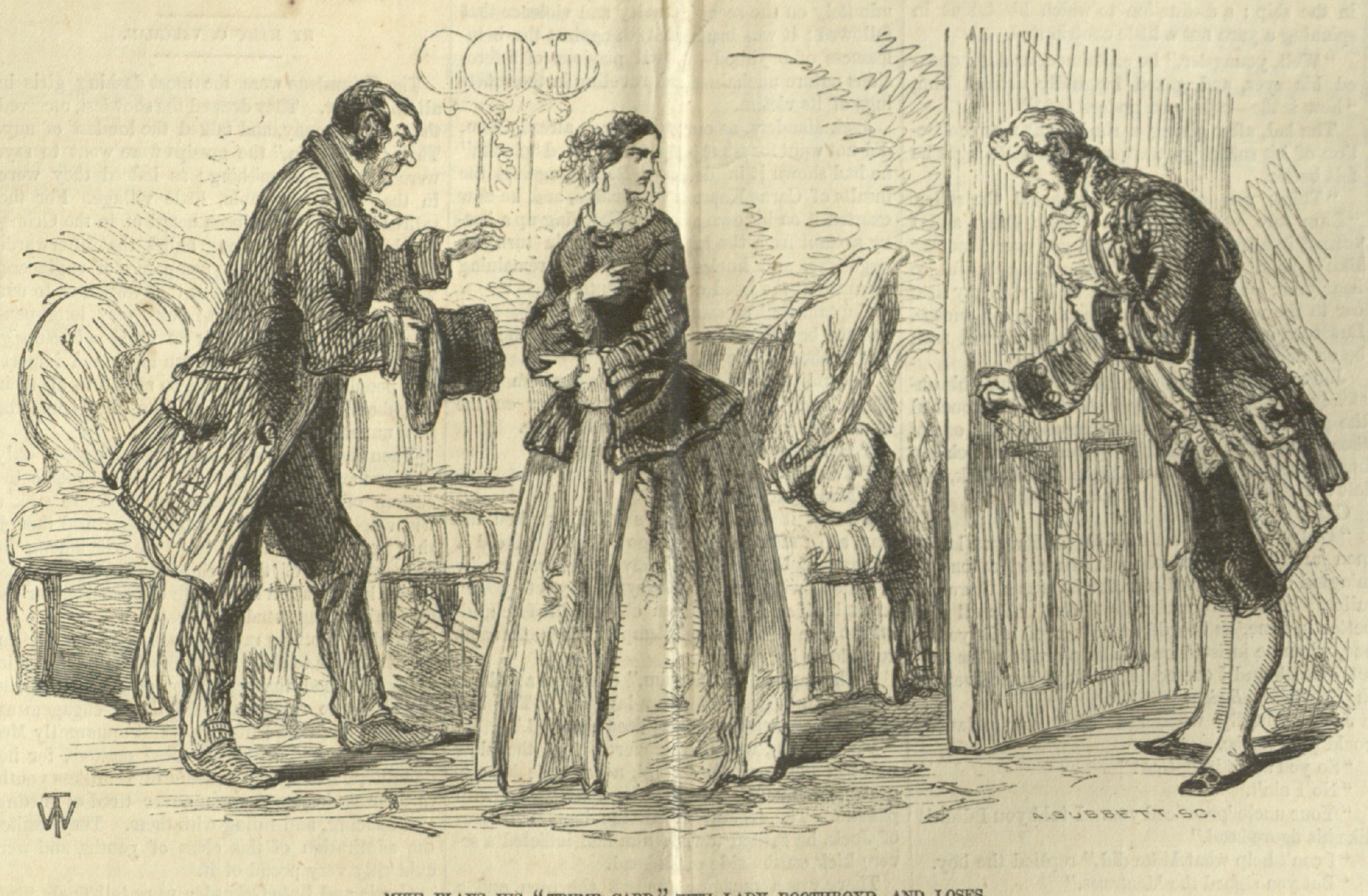
When dressed, the likeness—a point Mike had always insisted upon—appeared so extraordinary, that a comparative stranger might easily have mistaken one brother for the other.

"I don't think Andrew need feel ashamed of me now," he exclaimed, with intense satisfaction, as he contemplated his ungainly person in the piece of looking-glass before which poor Jack used to wash his ruddy face. "It's the feathers as makes the difference atween the goose and the swan. How surprised her ladyship will be," he added, with a chuckle. "Only to think of a real ladyship's character being at the *marcy* of old Mike. She must bleed pretty freely, I can tell her, to keep him quiet. I have often heard that words is waluable, sometimes more waluable than gold.

"Now I knows it!

"I shall soon quit this place," he exclaimed, musingly, and at the same time casting a dissatisfied look around him. "It was all very well; but somehow, since Jack has left me, I feel quite lonesome in it. It was a deep scheme of Andrew to rid himself of the boy," he added. "I hope the captain won't use him very badly."

Considering the share he had taken in the transaction, the wish was rather a singular one; but Mike had lately got rather nervous. He could not sleep well at night; and when he did sleep, was haunted by disagreeable dreams. He frequently saw little Fan lying on the bed, with only one thin covering over her, and the skylight open to admit the pitiless frost. Then he heard the cough; and it sounded so hollow and distinctly that it startled him from his slumber, and caused him to bury his face in the pillow, to avoid the gaze of the large, lustrous eyes, which imagination pictured peering at him through the surrounding darknesss.



MIKE PLAYS HIS "TRUMP CARD" WITH LADY BOOTHROYD, AND LOSES.

An uneasy conscience is a bad companion for a sleepless pillow.

It created quite a sensation in the neighborhood when the inhabitants of the Belvedere-road first saw Mike—who had hitherto worn knee-breeches, high-lows, and a pea-jacket—issue from his den dressed in a suit of black, and a white neckcloth. The comments were as varied as his appearance was singular.

"His clothes," observed one, with a sneer, "are not the blackest part about him."

The speaker was thinking of his heart.

"Where can his nephew be?" exclaimed a second.

"Perhaps he is mourning for him too."

"How about the child?"

These observations were heard by Mike as he walked past the groups of men and women gathered round the doors of the different beer-houses in the Belvedere-road; but he took no notice of them. Everything was straightforward and safe. He had the certificate of the doctor who attended Fan that she died a natural death; and in his heart—if he had such a thing—the man of many crimes fancied he might defy the prying eye and iron hand of human justice. As for that of heaven, he thought not of it. The idea that, by a means secret and inscrutable, it prepares the punishment of sin, never once entered his imagination.

It was a little past noon when he knocked at the residence of Sir Norman Boothroyd in the Park.

The porter was so startled by the resemblance to the steward, that he could only look at him, instead of answering his inquiry whether her ladyship was at home.

Mike had to repeat his question. Receiving no reply, he began to lose his temper.

"What are you *a-starin'* at?" he demanded, roughly. "Ain't you never seen a gentleman afore?"

The servant had seen a great many in his time—in fact, was more accustomed to that class of persons than any other—hence his astonishment at the arrival of a person who appeared too well-dressed to be seeking charity, and far too vulgar to suppose for an instant that he could be on the visiting list of his aristocratic mistress.

"Why, yes, my man," he replied, recovering himself, for the tone and manner of the speaker had quite dispelled his doubts.

"Can't ye answer me, then?"

"What can you want to see her ladyship for?"

"That's my businss," growled the convict.

"Charity, I suppose."

"Charity!" exclaimed Mike, indignantly; and at the same time glancing complacently at his new clothes. "I ain't no kite-flyer—never wor: not in my line of business."

"You had better write," suggested the porter.

"I can't write."

This was an admission which lowered the visitor very much in the opinion of the pampered menial. He could.

"Then get a friend, my good man, to do so for you."

"I ain't got no friends," answered the ruffian, "and if I had," he added, with a knowing wink, "I am too wide awake to trust 'em with my *bisness*."

"Send up your name, then," said the servant.

"She won't know it."

"You are a stranger to her ladyship, then?"

"No I ain't. *She knows me.* Tell her so."

"I can't take any such message," replied the man, eyeing him with an air of contempt.

"You can't?"

"No."

"Very well," said the visitor, advancing further into the hall, and seating himself in the speaker's own chair, certainly the most comfortable one in the place; "then here I sits till I sees her ladyship. You may stare, but I means it. And do you hear, Mr. Jack-in-office," he added, menacingly, "take care your impudence does not lose you your place. If my twin brother was here he'd soon tell you who I am, and send you to the right bout face, and no mistake."

"Your twin brother," repeated the astonished domestic.

"Yes—Andrew Silex."

The steward was a person not only disliked, but dreaded by the whole establishment of Sir Norman, for they knew the unbounded influence he exercised over him—an influence, by-the-by, never exercised for any good or benevolent purpose. Scarcely one of them but, at one period or other, had had occasion to prove its ill effects.

"If you will wait a few minutes," said the porter.

"I told yer I intended to wait," growled Mike.

"I will send up a message by my lady's own maid."

"Send it by whom yer will, only send it, and quickly, my fine feller."

Whilst the porter was speaking with the waiting-woman, whom he had sent for, Alice, who had just returned, attended by her governess, from her morning walk, passed through the hall. The convict stared at her very hard—the likeness of Lillian struch him forcibly.

"Perhaps," he mentally observed, "her ladyship was right, after all, and Lilly is ili—ili—I know what she meant; the best on 'em ain't to be trusted. But that is nothink to me, pervided she pays."

And then he thought on the sum promised.

Lady Boothroyd listened to the message which the waiting-woman brought her, and the description of the person and singular conduct of her visitor, with secret terror, for she guessed at once who it was that demanded to see her. Before she could make up her mind how to act, Alice and her governess, Mademoiselle Faulain, entered the drawing-room.

"Oh, mamma!" exclaimed the child, running to her, "there is such a strange man in the hall. He is so like Silex!"

"Horribly like to him," added the Frenchwoman.

There was no longer any doubt upon the mind of her ladyship, for she too had noted the resemblance on her visit to the convict's abode.

"He says he is Mr. Silex's brother, my lady," said the waiting-maid.

"Oh! why did you not tell me so before," exclaimed the guilty woman. "Show him into the breakfast-room. I will see him directly; and if your master should inquire for me, inform him that I am particularly engaged."

"Certainly, my lady."

"Mademoiselle, pray see that Alice practices the last exercises her master set her. He complained on his former visit that they had not been learnt."

By this direction the speaker freed herself from the observation both of her daughter and the Frenchwoman.

Mike had been seated nearly an hour in the breakfast-room, before Lady Boothroyd made her appearance. She had required time to collect herself for the interview. The *contre temps* of the man's finding her out, and calling, annoyed her exceedingly, after the decidedly clever scheme she had planned to avoid it; neither did the fact of his claiming brotherhood with the steward tend to reassure her. A vague suspicion haunted her mind for some days past, that the astute Mr. Silex had been playing a double game with her.

It was but a suspicion, and she had no other resource but to continue to trust him, for Mr. Silex was one of the few persons she did not care to measure her strength with. The web which crime and ambition had woven began to draw in its meshes; soon they would close round in a wall of adament.

"He can never have been fool enough," she thought, as she descended to the breakfast-room, "to confide even to a brother, the real name and parents of Lillian."

Then she reflected on the habitually cool and cautious proceedings of the steward, and dismissed her fears as ridiculous and groundless.

Mike had expected to see the lady confused, and totally unprepared to meet the discovery of her name and abode. To his astonishment, she entered the room with a calm, collected air, as if the transaction which had passed between them had been one of the most common occurrences of everyday life, and coolly asked him the purport of his strange visit, and still stranger conduct to her servants.

"They wouldn't let me see you," added the man, somewhat abashed.

"I am not in the habit of seeing strangers," was the reply.

"But I ain't no stranger."

"Nearly so," observed her ladyship; "but we will pass that over. You have not come without a cause, I presume, and I reserve my opinion of your conduct till I have heard it."

Mike glanced at the crape upon his hat in a most significant manner, and tried to look like one very much afflicted.

The guilty woman turned deadly pale.

"The child!" she faltered.

"Dead, my lady," replied the ruffian, "but it worn't my fault. I growed as fond on her as if she had been my own, she had such pretty engaging ways with her."

"By accident?"

"No, my lady; cough—consumption the doctor called it, for I had a doctor—very expensive; *but I knowed you would see me paid.*"

"Certainly," answered Lady Boothroyd, still more astonished, especially at the cause of Lilly's death, for never had a child appeared less likely to fall a victim to the fatal disease he named; "and so the doctors said she died of consumption?"

"I've got the certificate."

"And when did her death take place?"

"A week ago. We buried her last Thursday. I could not well do it afore, seeing as the doctors opened her. That was my wish. I wanted everything all straight and right."

Hardened as she was, his hearer shuddered. The tale of consumption did not deceive her for a single instant. She remembered too well how the eyes of the speaker had sparkled with cupidity when she vaguely hinted at the five hundred pounds. The feeling of remorse, however, was but momentary, and quickly vanished giving place to the stronger one of satisfaction, on hearing that the object of her fear was removed from her path so cleverly.

Mike took from his pocket two crumpled pieces of paper. One was the certificate of the burial of a child named Lillian, family name unknown, it having been placed at nurse by strangers with Michael Silex, residing in the Belvedere-road.

Lady Boothroyd received it with a firm hand, and perused it attentively.

The second was signed by the parish doctor, certifying the cause of her death and the *post mortem* examination of the body.

Nothing could be more satisfactory; and yet the lady began to feel anything but assured. The event appeared so sudden—so improbable.

"I will cause the affair to be inquired into," she observed.

"You will find it all right," replied her visitor, whose eye never flinched from her keen gaze; "the child took a cold, and went off like a flower. When shall I touch the money?" he added, anxiously. "I am a poor man, and can't afford to wait."

"What money?"

"The five hundred pounds."

"And do you imagine, my good man," inquired Lady Boothroyd, "that I am such a simpleton as to part with so large a sum upon the faith of two documents like these, without previous inquiry, to convince me of their authenticity? Certainly not. Besides, the money was promised on certain conditions, that you treated the child well."

"I treated her as you *wished me*," muttered Mike.

"That remains to be seen; and in the expectation that she would remain years with you. I see," she added, glancing at the first paper, "that your name is Silex."

"No mistake about that, my lady."

"The brother of my steward."

"His twin brother."

"I will write for him to come up to town instantly," said his mistress; "as he recommended you to me, he must investigate the affair; and on proof—the *fullest proof*—that the child has been properly treated by you, and is really dead, I will reflect on my inconsiderate promise, and come to some arrangement."

"I can't wait."

The well-arched eyebrows of Lady Boothroyd became slightly elevated.

"I won't wait," added the man

"In that case, I must refer you to my solicitor," observed the former.

"You dare not."

"That remains to be seen," continued the speaker, rising. "Do you imagine you can terrify me, or that you have a child to deal with? From your insolent looks and tone of menace," she added, "one would imagine *a crime* had to be paid for, instead of one of the simplest transactions in the world—a child, whose birth was a misfortune, put out to nurse."

Mike regarded her with a certain amount of admiration, despite the rage he felt at being put off. He liked pluck, as he termed it, especially in a woman. This feeling, however, did not prevent his playing his last card—the trump, as he considered it.

"In that case, my lady," he said, "I shall see your husband."

The mistress of the house coolly rung the bell.

"See if Sir Norman is in his study," she said to the footman who answered it; "here is a person who desires to speak with him."

"No I don't," hastily exclaimed the convict, completely cowed by her coolness; "what you say is quite satisfactory."

"As you please."

"Then I won't trouble Sir Norman."

With a waive of her hand his mistress dismissed the servant from the room. It was a bold stroke of *finesse* on her part; but the danger was worthy of the risk; which, after all, was not very great, since, sooner or later, her husband must be entrusted with the secret.

"I will write to your brother this very day," said the lady, when the footman had quitted the breakfast-room, and she once more found herself alone with her visitor. "Directly he arrives, you shall hear from me."

Mike pleaded hard for a portion of the money. He would have so much liked to have received something in hand; but Lady Boothroyd firmly refused, although she fully intended to fulfill her promise, provided everything turned out to have passed as he stated. Only she did not choose to show the slightest sign of fear. It would have been impolitic, unworthy a woman of her tact, a quality on which, like most cunning persons, she particularly prided herself.

Mike left the house in the Regent's Park with far less confident feelings than he had entered it. As the cards were dealt at present, the game did not appear quite so certain; but then he consoled himself with the reflection that the best trump, Lillian, was still in the pack.

"What a precious fool I should have been," he thought, as he plodded his way back to the Belvedere road, "had I really run any risk, and done what that fine-spoken madam wished me to do, only she would not speak out. She'll consider over it, will she? Umph! I'll consider over it, too; and we shall see whose considerations will prove the best. I must see Fiddler Dick, and get back the gal agin; *then* I'll talk to 'em if they try to rob me of my dues. I don't think," he added, "they will find Mike half so simple as they take him for."

Shortly after his return home, the convict received a visit from Bet, who told him of her husband's misfortune, as she called it, of course concealing her own share in the transaction; how Dexter had taken the children and *business* out of her hands, and concluded by hoping that Dick's old pal would act honorably, and pay her the twenty pounds.

"Twenty devils!" repeated the man; "why, I ain't got it yet."

"But you will have it."

"Can't say; but where is Lilly?"

His mortification and rage on hearing of her loss nearly drove him frantic. As he figuratively expressed himself, it was the ace of trumps against him in the game he had to play against two such experienced hands as his brother and Lady Boothroyd.

"Find her, Bet," he said, "and you shall have the money; but unless you do, not a stiver from me; so now you know what to expect."

The woman promised. The twenty pounds were an additional incentive to renew her search for the victim that had escaped her.

Three days after this important transaction, Mike was seated, in no very amiable humor, in his cottage, when the steward made his appearance. Mr. Silex was evidently both annoyed and excited. In the first place, his brother had broken faith with him, in seeking a personal interview with Lady Boothroyd, and in the second, contrived to mystify him.

Before calling, he had seen both the parish doctor and the clerk, and inspected the registry. Nothing could, upon the surface, appear more clear; and yet Mr. Silex continued to doubt. The medical man described the child; the color of her eyes and hair; her age, her answering to the name of Lillian, still Andrew was not convinced of her death. The only conclusion he came to was that Mike was a much cleverer rascal than he had ever given him credit for.

"Well," he said, seating himself, "you have managed it nicely."

"Managed what nicely?" demanded the convict.

"The death of the child."

"I ain't a-managed it; it came naturally. The poor thing couldn't stand the damp and cold; the cough settled on her lungs, and it was soon over. Ask the doctor," he added; "he knows that it was all straight *forrards* and right."

"I have asked him."

"You can see the register."

"I have seen it."

"What do you talk about managing it for, then?" exclaimed Mike; "but I know you and your fine mistress thinks to do me out of my rights, but I won't stand it. If I ain't paid I'll go before a magistrate, and make oath of the whole affair. If the police and the *noosepapers* gets hold on it, they'll soon ferret the truth out."

"There's nothing, Mike, to ferret out; the child was a poor man's child."

"But its mother worn't poor," retorted his brother, who had firmly made up his mind to the fact that Lady Boothroyd was the mother of Lillian. "Besides," he added, "if she wor poor, why did her ladyship promise me the five hundred pounds?"

The steward reflected for a few instants. He saw that the proceeding the speaker threatened might be followed by great inconvenience; and angry as he felt with him for his breach of faith, made up his mind to seeing him paid.

"You shall have the money," he said.

"All on it?"

"All."

"And when?"

"In a few days."

The countenance of Mike brightened. It was a much better termination to the affair than he expected.

"Ah, Andrew," he said, "if you had only acted like a brother and a twin, we might have done well together—played into each other's hands. Her ladyship—since she is one—hasn't deceived me with her coolness and indifference, though she is uncommon clever; there was a fortin' hanging to that child, and I ought to have had at least half of it."

Mr. Silex disclosed his remarkably white teeth, and laughed very heartily. The idea tickled his fancy; it was exactly the sum he had fixed upon as the price of his own co-operation.

"I ought," added the speaker, "and you knows it. Didn't you tell me Lilly would one day be worth her weight in gold to you?"

"If she lived," observed the steward.

A very peculiar sneer flitted over the features of his brother. Andrew saw it, and all his suspicions returned.

"Look you, Mike," he said, greatly excited, "we know each other fully at last."

"Pretty well," answered the amiable twin.

"If Lilly is not really dead—and I have my doubts—let me know the truth, and the five hundred shall be doubled."

"It will be time," answered the convict, cautiously, "to enter upon that affair when the first is settled; not a word till then."

"And then?"

Mike gave a knowing wink, but not another word could the clever Mr. Silex succeed in extracting from him on the subject.

CHAPTER XXV.

JACK MANDERS REFUSES TO SIGN HIS INDENTURES.

The Caradoc, the name of the ship on which poor Jack Manders had been so artfully trapanned, was a heavy Dutch-built vessel, exceedingly long in the hull, abruptly raised in the bows, and square at the stern; nothing graceful in her outline, but evidently a slow sailer. Instead of breasting the waves gallantly like a sea-bird, she broke through them with a dogged, sullen, lumbering reel, which rendered it as difficult for a landsman to keep his legs as her commander to guard his temper—as the new apprentice discovered as soon as they passed the Nore. For the first time the vigorous, active boy felt physically and morally prostrate. He did not care a pin for his life; it had never presented a very pleasant page to him. He would scarcely have resisted had any one attempted to throw him overboard—perhaps have thanked them for the trouble.

Mingled with the agonies of sea-sickness were the fears he felt for Lillian, left to the tender mercies of his uncle Mike, without a protector to stand between her and his brutal nature. Jack had not forgotten the triumphant waving of the knotted cord, and the recollection drove him almost mad as he lay upon the deck of his floating prison, his aching head pillowed upon a coil of ropes.

Still he never shed a tear nor uttered a word of complaint, though either might have relieved him. The conviction that the world was dealing harshly, unjustly with him, filled his heart with bitter thoughts; and he mentally asked himself what he had done to merit its unkindness. It wasn't his fault that he was the son of a convict, that one uncle had made him a thief, and the other refused to assist him to live by honesty. He almost thought honesty itself must be a humbug, seeing how well his relatives contrived to do without it.

Whilst the captain remained on deck none of the crew took the slightest notice of him: not from indifference, but kindness. They knew that any expression of sympathy on their part would only excite the malignity of the tyrant, who never felt so happy as when he had some helpless victim to vent his spleen upon. No sooner, however, had he withdrawn to his cabin, than the sailor who had joked with him on board the steamer, and the lad who had exchanged knives with him, approached the spot where Jack was lying. One threw an old pea-jacket over his shoulders, for the day was bitterly cold; the other drew a piece of tarpaulin within his reach, that he might cover himself with it in case it rained.

"Well, young grampus," said the old man, kindly, "how is it?"

The boy looked in his face sadly, but made no reply.

"Bad, eh? Well, I daresay you are. Was once bad myself, thouf it's so long ago that I forgot it. You'll soon get over it, and sleep as soundly as a baby rocked by its mother in a cradle."

The assurance conveyed but little consolation to Jack. He had never had a cradle; and could not remember his mother.

"He musn't lie here all night," continued the speaker, musingly; "we must get him in the fokesal."

This was addressed to Caleb.

"No, no!" moaned the lad; "let me lie here. I shall die if you move me."

"Die!" repeated the seaman. "Bah! The sea is rayther a rough nus at first, but she's a kind one. Afore we clear the Channel we shall see you as active as a dolphin—lively as a flying fish."

"Pray, let me remain."

"It might be as well," observed the young sailor who had exchanged knives with him; "the air will do him good."

Bunce glanced significantly at the cabin door.

Caleb understood him, and added his persuasions. Between them they supported, or rather carried the sufferer down the companion ladder.

"Where are we to stow him?" exclaimed Bunce, looking round. "The poor lad has neither kit or hammock. It's my opinion those who sent him to sea wanted to get rid of him. Thof I wor a parish 'prentice," he added, "they rigged me out when they shipped me."

"Drop him into my berth," answered Caleb, "I'm in the first watch, so it won't much signify; when I turn in I can take a snooze on my chest."

With rough, but genuine kindness, they placed Jack in the hammock of the speaker. *Placing* him there really was a kindness; for, had his legs been steady, and his head clear, he never could have got into it himself. He might as easily have held an eel in his hand without its gliding through his fingers. Talk of difficulties!—young gentlemen in spangled vests, who twist themselves in and out between the lathes of a ladder, bring their feet over their shoulder, hop about upon their hands, and indulge in all kinds of imaginable and unimaginable acrobatic eccentricities, might give it up in despair. It is impossible for a landsman either to creep, drop, or jump into a hammock. We speak from experience. How sailors achieve it is a mystery we never could clearly comprehend.

Well do we remember in our juvenile days having been pitched over its sides in making the attempt, to the great detriment of our figure-head, as an amphibious monster, who stood watching our gymnastics, with a fiend-like grin upon his countenance, designated our battered caput.

Having made Jack what they considered exceedingly comfortable, his friends left him to go on deck.

Fortunately the wind, which, during the day, had been blowing a hard gale, suddenly fell; a dead calm ensued, and the hull of the Caradoc lay in a state of comparative repose. The waves were not the only things which had ceased to heave.

When Bunce and the lad returned to the forecastle at the end of their watch, they found the new apprentice fast asleep, and dreaming as well as sleeping; for he muttered frequently to himself, and more than once the name of Lillian escaped him.

"Who's Lillian, I wonder?" said the old sailor.

"His mother, no doubt," answered his companion.

Caleb was only sixteen, had not been more than a year from home, and doubtless recollected the tearful eyes which gazed on him when he bade farewell; the trembling lips pressed to his in the fulness of maternal fondness. The reply was a natural one: the love of a mother is the first love that fills a heart, the purest and the best; forgotten, perhaps, in passion's trials; but returning to us, like the sweet thoughts of childhood, when the the memory of all other love is but a dream.

Bunce was one of those seamen generally designated "sea-lawyers;" not a man on board knew how far a sailor might go, and yet steer within the line of mutiny, better than he did; he was a great stickler for his own rights, and tolerably careful not to infringe those of others. No matter what captain he shipped with, if his messmates had any complaint to make, they generally elected him spokesman: the consequence was that, after the skipper and first and second mates, he was, perhaps, the most important as well as popular person in the ship; a distinction to which his talent in spinning a yarn not a little contributed.

"Well, youngster," he exclaimed, as Jack opened his eyes, and gazed languidly around him, "how is the—egh—you understand?"

The lad, after giving a shudder at the recollection of his sufferings, answered that he thought he felt better.

"Think you are better!" repeated the sailor. "I am sure you are better. When Caleb and I turned in after the first watch you were snoring like a young grampus; it was quite beautiful to hear you; only I was obliged to lie with my deaf ear to the windward afore I could get a snooze. But turn out," he added; "the skipper will soon be on deck."

Jack Manders made an attempt to quit his unsteady resting-place. The instant his feet touched the ground, the treacherous hammock, with one of those playfully eccentric movements which no human law of motion can define, swung back, and left him sprawling on the floor.

Caleb assisted him to rise.

"Only to think what helpless lubbers you landsmen are," exclaimed the old man, in a tone of mingled contempt and pity, for he was a thorough sailor. "But never mind that now. 'You'll larn better in time,' as the old owl observed to its young one, when he insisted on taking a cruise afore sunset. Caleb and I are come to hold a palaver, as the South Sea *Ingians* call it."

Jack mentally wondered what a "palaver" could possibly be.

"So you are a 'prentice?"

"No I ain't."

"Your uncle 'prenticed you. I told you I didn't like his figure-head."

"I can't help what Mike did," replied the boy.

"But you signed the 'dentures."

"I ain't signed nothing," observed the lad. "How should I, when I can't write?"

"Then *don't*," whispered his adviser, lowering his voice. "It's your only chance. The first port we comes to, slip your cable and run. The skipper can't force you to return without showing your 'dentures to the *English counsel*—that's law and justice, though they ar'n't allays one."

The last words were pronounced as gravely as a judge could have spoken them from the bench. In fact, Mr. Bunce prided himself on being looked up to as a legal authority at sea. Jack thanked him, and promised to abide by his advice.

"He shall cut me in pieces," he said, "afore I make my mark."

The old sailor nodded approvingly.

"And I won't do a thing."

"Avast there!" interrupted the ex-lawyer; "the skipper afore the mates, the mates afore the seman, and the seman afore the loafer, but the ship afore them all. Every hand that cracks a biscuit on board of her must take his turn. We are short handed, so no skulking duty."

Jack thought it very hard that he should be compelled to crack biscuits on board the Caradoc, when he would so much rather have gone with even half a loaf on shore. But he was quite wise enough to promise to do his best.

Sailors are proverbially a kind-hearted race—reckless, improvident, fond of fun, frolic, and dissipation, but rarely unfeeling. The unprovided state in which the new hand had been brought on board excited their sympathy, and they made up a kit between them. The chief contributions, however, came from Bunce and Caleb.

In the course of the morning, Jack was sent for by Captain Gall into the cabin.

"Mind how you tack," said the old seaman; "don't be beaten by press of sail. If the skipper mounts royals, up with your sky-scrapers."

In other words, the speaker recommended him to oppose both persuasion and threats by the most unflinching firmness. The boy nodded, as much as to say that he understood how, and with a heavy heart, mounted the companion-ladder.

Captain Gall was one of those men in whose breasts nature had implanted a love of tyranny. Had he been born to the purple of the Cæsars, his great delight would have been in the arena. Restricted to a narrower sphere, his principal pleasure was in tormenting his crew, and rendering them miserable. But it was on his apprentices chiefly that his brutal temper loved to vent itself, simply because he could indulge in it with greater safety. There was scarcely a limit to their ill-usage. The angry word, followed by the ready blow, were outrages of everyday occurrence.

The eyes which met his savage glance with firmness, excited him almost to madness, whilst those which shrunk in terror from his gaze, increased the zest the sight of their agony afforded him.

Nearly every voyage he was compelled to ship a fresh crew; scarcely a sailor ever sailed with him a second time. But there was no escape for the apprentices.

When Jack Manders made his appearance in the cabin, the captain eyed him sternly for some moments without uttering a word; the boy returned his gaze steadily, but without defiance: the tyrant would much rather have seen him trembling and cowed before him, his self-possession irritated him.

"Well!" he exclaimed, "now that you have quitted your evil way of life, and your worthy uncles have given you a chance of retrieving your character on board the Caradoc, I trust you feel grateful to them, and have made up your mind to prove obedient to me?"

"What have I to be grateful for?" demanded the lad, coloring deeply at the allusion to the means by which he had hitherto lived. "If I did wrong, Mike made me."

"I don't believe a word of it," replied the skipper.

"Can't help that," observed the boy, philosophically.

Gall felt very much inclined to knock him down, but for the present he restrained his passion. He had one point to gain before his victim would be legally in his power.

"Sign that paper," he said, pointing to what purported to be an indenture, binding Jack Manders an apprentice to the owners of the good ship Caradoc for the space of seven years.

"What is it?"

"What is it? you impudent young rascal," repeated the brute, striding towards him; "it's the chance of making an honest man of you. Write your name."

"I can't."

"Make your mark, then," added the captain, thrusting a pen into his hand.

"I won't."

The words had no sooner escaped his lips, than a blow upon the temple sent the poor boy headlong and half stunned against the side of the cabin.

"I'll teach you," exclaimed the coward, "to bandy words with me! There! there! and there!" he added, striking him again with every word. "Now will you sign?"

Poor Jack, although exceedingly pale, and all but senseless from the cruel treatment, had still sufficient spirit to answer "No."

We will not shock our readers by dwelling too minutely on the scene of cruelty and violence that followed; it was brutal strength against the helplessness of boyhood—the evil passions of a ferocious nature unchained, and reveling in the sufferings of its victim.

Jack Manders, as our readers have already seen, did not want for what is generally termed "pluck;" he had shown it in defending Rachel against the insults of Carus Kearn on the bridge, and he now exerted it on his own account. Catching up a heavy sextant from the table, he became in turn the aggressor, and hurled it with all his remaining strength at the head of his persecutor.

Captain Gall measured his length upon the floor, and the boy, bleeding and exhausted from the contest, rushed up the cabin stairs.

Several of the sailors, amongst whom were Bunce and Caleb, were grouped together on the deck. They had been listening to his cries.

"Have you signed?" said the former.

"You know I can't write."

"Made your mark, then?"

"I left it on the captain's head," replied the boy, as he sank exhausted upon deck. "I did it to save my life. He would have murdered me."

Caleb, with the natural sympathy of youth, knelt by his side, and began chafing his forehead, whilst one of the men attempted to pour some rum down his throat.

"The captain will flog him," observed a sailor.

"He can't," replied the sea-lawyer. "The boy is not an apprentice—he has been crimped."

The captain, who had recovered from the blow and fall he so richly merited, now made his appearance, foaming with rage and half mad with passion. The instant he saw the inanimate form of Jack, he rushed towards him and inflicted a severe kick on the side of his head.

There was a murmur amongst the men, and a cry of shame.

"The rascal—the villain!" roared the brute, preparing to inflict a second kick. "I'll teach him to mutiny on board my ship. I'll flog the——"

"It ar'n't mutiny," said Bunce, firmly, "and you ar'n't got no right to flog him."

The infuriated monster glared on him like a tiger about to spring.

"He ar'n't no 'prentice," added the old man; "you crimped him."

"Apprentice or no apprentice, he shall feel the lash," answered Captain Gall. "Up with him."

Not a hand stirred.

The commander of the Caradoc had displayed his temper somewhat earlier than he was accustomed to do, for the Caradoc was not yet out of the channel. There was something in the sullen disobedience of the men that ought to have warned him, but passion had blinded reason. Calling for his pistols, which the steward brought him, he looked round him resolutely, and directed the men to tie Jack up.

The order was met with the same result.

"You will stand by me, Fraser," he said, addressing his first mate.

"Certainly," answered the officer, a canny Scot. "But, captain, war it no' better to gi' the men no excuse for disobedience by showing the lad's indentures?"

"No!" roared the bully.

"Very weel," replied Fraser, coolly.

"For the last time," exclaimed Captain Gall, eyeing the old seaman, Bunce, with a menacing look, for he at once set him down as the ringleader in the affair, "will you obey my orders? Remember," he added, "it is mutiny."

"It is worse," exclaimed Caleb, "*it is murder!* Your victim is dead!"

The courage of the white-livered tyrant fell at the word, and the bully changed into the coward.

The first mate walked very methodically to the spot where the boy was lying, and placed his hand upon his heart. It beat, but still very faintly.

"I don't think the poor laddie has long to live," he observed; "but he is no' dead yet."

The commander of the Caradoc began to breathe a little more freely. He felt as if a very uncomfortable pressure had been suddenly removed from his neck.

"Take him to his hammock," he said, turning to the second mate; "the young rascal is only shamming."

"He ain't got no hammock," said Bunce.

"Or kit," added a sailor.

"Came on board with nothing but the rigging he stands in," added the sea-lawyer. "'Prentice! Tell it to the marines! The boy has been crimped and murdered! In my 'pinion, the ship ought to put back to port again."

The brutal commander, who saw his authority periled at the very onset of his voyage, saw that it would not do to push matters too far, for, if Jack really died, it would require all his tact, and a pretty amount of hard swearing, to get clear off.

Whispering a few words to the first mate, he retired to his cabin, and something which sounded very like a hiss accompanied him.

Prudence forbade his noticing or resenting it.

Meanwhile Jack Manders, who still continued insensible from the treatment he had received, was carried down to the forecastle, and placed a second time in the hammock of Caleb, who watched over him like a brother. It was not much that the poor fellow had in his power beyond kind words and sympathy to bestow, for he, too, was an apprentice, and, unfortunately, had signed his indentures.

That night Captain Gall did not venture on deck, but left the command of the Caradoc to his mate, with orders to report to him every hour.

"Well, Fraser," he said, as the young Scotchman entered the state cabin, "how are the men?"

"Quiet enough noo."

"And the youngster?"

"Still very bad, sir. He has been raving and talking in the strangest o' fashions aw the night."

"It's all a sham," replied the commander.

The mate remained silent.

"I'm afraid we have got an awkward crew," observed the former.

"Indeed, sir, it's my opinion."

"Of course you will stand by me?"

"In aw that's just and lawful," answered the canny Scot.

The captain scowled upon him, and dismissed him once more to the deck.

The report made by the mate of Jack's condition, was anything but exaggerated. The sufferings, mental and bodily, of his first night on board, joined to the brutal treatment he had been subjected to brought on a fever. In his ravings he uttered strange words; but ever and anon, gentler thoughts appeared to come over him, and he murmured, as he had done in his sleep, the name of Lillian.

Several days passed before he could be considered out of danger, and a still longer period ere he quitted his hammock.

Meanwhile the Caradoc still held her way.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

COUSIN LETTIE;

OR,

THE WEDDING AT THE GRIMSDENS.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

The Grimsdens were the most dashing girls in all Chichester. They dressed the showiest, received the most company, and talked the loudest of any. Their "goings on," the gossips were wont to say, were perfectly astonishing; as indeed they were in that quiet, puritanic, little village. For the railroad had not even been heard of in the Grimsdens' day; and the young ladies that afterwards flirted with the successive companies of engineers, which the commencement of that work sent to our village, were then in short frocks, very long pantalets, and wore their hair in braids *a la Kenwig*. Now that Chichester has grown large and important, people have hardly time to attend to all their neighbors' affairs, and girls like the Grimsdens pass unnoticed.

Then the college students were almost the only young men in Chichester, for it had become the custom of those who were born there to seek a wider field of enterprise in the West. And though they very often returned to seek a wife among the acquaintances of their childhood, their absence would have made a sad dearth of beaux, but for the aforesaid college students.

Prudent mothers rather discouraged any particular attentions to their daughters from these collegians, who had the reputation of great flirts, and forgetting to return and fulfill the engagements made in their student-days. But apparently Mrs. Grimsden cared little for these matters, for her daughters had always a train of beardless youths in their society, and were never tired of flirting, and dancing, and riding with them. They excited the admiration of this class of youths, and were evidently very proud of it.

Carrie and Lute Grimsden were tall, finely formed girls, and possessed a sort of coarse beauty. Carrie's hair was black, and hung always in long, heavy ringlets on either side her dark, piquant face. She had flashing eyes and very white teeth, which was said to be the reason that she was seldom seen without a smile upon her face. Lute had brown hair in smooth, satiny braids; a low, white forehead, and cold, gray eyes. She, too, had white teeth, and laughed a great deal; though her mouth was too wide to make a perpetual smile like Carrie's, fascinating. They made their house so pleasant that it was not wonderful the students loved to resort there. The only wonderful thing in the estimation of the people of Chichester was, that, as year after year some of their admirers went away in the graduating class, none of them ever returned to marry a Grimsden.

But year after year passed away. The Grimsdens had become a sort of "institution," to use an expressive Americanism. Anxious mammas at a distance had heard of them, and warned their young candidates for the Freshman class of their fascinations, and the warning was repeated, with many an idle jest, by more sophisticated "Sophs."

Every year Mrs. Grimsden felt sure that there must be a wedding in the family before the close of the twelvemonth; she had predicted and prayed for this result times without number, and it came at last, but not to the exact fulfillment of her desires.

All the visitors at the Grimsdens noticed a young girl who usually opened the door, and was sometimes seen to sit silently at a corner of the family table, or in the corner of the square family pew at church, the most inconvenient corner where she could neither see the minister, nor be seen by the students. A few noticed that her small, pale face was pretty, and could light up with a beautiful expression if she were pleased, but its downcast sadness and shyness attracted little attention.

All that was known of her was that the Grimsdens called her Cousin Lettie, and made her a sort of upper servant, nurse for the younger children, attendant of the young ladies, the receiver of the ill humor of all the family, together with their cast-off finery and broken meat, such as the servants proper rejected.

Though the servants sometimes joined in this treatment of the unfortunate girl at home, they were not so unjust as to withhold a true appreciation of her in their conversation with those they met abroad. Meanwhile Lettie, as is the general fate of the poor and friendless, endured her lot almost without sympathy.

Lettie was the orphan daughter of Mrs. Grimsden's only brother. She was still young, but she had not forgotten the home of luxury in which her early childhood had been spent. She remembered the beautiful things that then surrounded her, her kind father with his proud, handsome face, and her gentle young mother, always pale and languid from ill-health, but with a sweet smile for her darling child ever upon her beautiful lips. She remembered how she used to be carried in her mother's arms to meet her father at the door, when he returned at evening, the fond meeting and the affectionate caresses that marked the meeting, the pleasant tea-table, the glowing winter fire beside which they sat at evening, the books her father would read, the sweet music her mother drew from the pianoforte, the friends who sometimes came to visit them. All these things were fresh in the mind of Lettie Shaw. But there were later scenes, imprinted on her memory in more vivid colors.

Her mother's face had grown paler and more wan. Bursts of glad song fell more seldom from her lips, as she sat at her needle in her husband's absence; she no longer ran with her little one in her arms, to meet him on his return at evening. But he would return looking strangely, and sometimes seeming very angry and impatient with Lettie's mother, and even with herself, repulsing all their caresses, and falling into deep sleeps upon the sofa, from which he would be roused only with the greatest difficulty.

Lettie also remembered when they removed from their beautiful home—when all the elegant furniture and pictures were sold—her mother's piano and pretty work-table, and all the graceful ornaments of those pleasant rooms. How then they went to live in poor lodgings, where her mother tried to work—for they had no servants, and grew weaker and weaker, and finally lay down upon the poor bed from which she rose no more. How through her months of illness her father was seldom at home, and how they sometimes had not enough to eat, and not clothes to wear, nor fire to warm them. She remembered, too, how their poor neighbors had been very kind to her sick mother, and that some of them had closed her beautiful eyes when she died, and had carefully prepared her wasted remains for the coffin and the grave.

She remembered her father's terrible but brief remorse when he returned to his home and looked upon the corpse of his wife. How, for a little while, he tried to refrain from indulgence in his evil habits, and came home regularly, bringing food, and clothing, and fuel, and that she was made glad by these comforts. She remembered, too, his gradual return to his former indulgence, and the stormy winter night when men came home bearing his dead body upon a door, and told her in rough, yet kindly accents, that he had been killed in a drunken fight at a drinking-house, by one of his boon companions; and how, when one of them added, "But the police has got him, and he'll swing for it," she begged and prayed that his life might be spared, because "he might grow better, but to kill him would never bring back her father any more."

After this fearful night all events faded into indistinctness, until she found herself, on a pleasant spring morning, traveling with her uncle Grimsden toward his country home. She was very weak from a long sickness, he told her, but she would soon be well when she came to live up among the mountains, at Chichester. He looked and spoke so kindly, that she felt emboldened to ask him what mountains were like, and many another question that showed the little city child's ignorance of all rural sights.

He had told her about her aunt and cousins, whom she had never seen, and the home to which she was going, until she thought she would know them all when she came to see them, and looked forward joyfully to the time of her arrival.

If her welcome was not all she had hoped—for the impressions received by such things in childhood are not very permanent—Lettie never knew how unwelcome she had been—how little Mrs. Grimsden rejoiced to see another girl added to the household, until after her kind uncle's death, which took place in the third year of her residence at Chichester, and when she was thirteen years old.

From that time Lettie had taken the place of a servant in the family; she had known slights before, but never positive abuse; but all restraint being removed now, even this was not wanting. She was removed from school, compelled to work constantly, to wear coarse and faded garments, and to sleep with the servants in the garret.

But neither coarse clothing, nor scanty fare, could destroy the beauty of her exquisite features, so like her gentle mother's, except the dark eye, that could flash forth glances like those of her father's in the days of his proud manhood. And like her mother's were her small hands, embrowned by toil, but undisfigured and still beautiful in form; and her slight but graceful figure was like hers, too, with the same willowy movements. Only the proud lift of the head, when all the scorn of her nature was roused by some unusual indignity, was like her father's; and sometimes even Mrs. Grimsden quailed as she saw it—it so reminded her of the dead. In constant, uncheered labor the years passed, and Lettie was seventeen.

At this period Lester Hastings came to Chichester. He was of Southern birth—the eldest son of one of the oldest and wealthiest of the South Carolinean aristocracy. He was a fine scholar, also, and brought with him the prestige of his scholastic attainments. He entered the Junior class, and consequently had but two years to remain at Chichester.

The Grimsdens resolved to attack the citadel of Lester Hastings's heart, as soon as they heard of his arrival; but he was an ardent student, and sought no society, so that for a long time they were baffled. It was only by cultivating the acquaintance of the daughters of one of the professors, at whose house Hastings occasionally visited, that Lute finally obtained an introduction to him. After that she thought all would be easy, but she was mistaken. Hastings was frequently invited to the Grimsdens', and the most fascinating of bows and smiles were freely bestowed upon him, whenever either of the young ladies met him in the street. But all in vain were those blandishments. It was not until after his recovery from a slight illness at the commencement of his second year, during which Mrs. Grimsden had sent him daily presents of jellies and all sorts of nice things, prepared as one of her notes assured him by the hands of her daughters, that he crossed the threshold of the Grimsden mansion. Transparent as were the movements of the family, Hastings was too true a gentleman to neglect the obvious courtesy of a visit of thanks, for the kindness they had bestowed upon him.

It was on this occasion that he first saw Lettie. She came, in answer to his ring, to admit him. Some unusual impertinence of her cousins, or injustice from her aunt, had called a deep flush to her ordinarily pale cheek, while her eyes were flashing, and her throat proudly arched in the superb disdain she felt. Hastings thought he had never seen a creature so beautiful, and he looked in surprise at the coarse bib apron of brown holland that scarcely concealed her patches and faded dress, and the heavy shoes upon her small feet, as she preceded him to the parlor door, where, in tones that sounded most musical in his ear, she announced his name. He looked round after he had entered and made his bow to the ladies, vainly expecting to see Lettie, but she had disappeared.

So beautiful a creature could not be a servant, he thought, and every time the door opened he expected to see her enter and take her place among the ladies of the family. But after having prolonged his call to an extraordinary length, he was forced to leave without another glimpse of that beautiful face.

The next day was Sunday, and when the Grimsdens saw Lester Hastings's gaze fixed upon their pew, they blushed, and half smiled, and tossed their heads in pride, for they thought him won at last, but they never dreamed that the face his eyes sought was the sweet face of Lettie Shaw, half hidden beneath her old straw bonnet, and overshadowed by Mrs. Grimsden's towering plumes.

The strange intuition that makes one conscious of a fixed gaze, created an unwonted restlessness in Lettie that morning, and her eyes, which usually were cast down beneath their long lashes, wandered over the congregation, until at length they met those whose ardent glances had attracted them. Then, while the bright blood flashed over her pale face, dyeing even her white brow with its rich crimson, her eyes were again cast down. Not once again could Lester Hastings win a glance.

Others than he had noticed that tell-tale blush, and the poor child received a lecture, on her return home, for "gazing at the students," and then "blushing like a baby when caught." Next day when Carrie Grimsden made a round of calls, for the purpose of announcing the visit of Lester Hastings to their house, she heard from several sources that the gentleman had been making inquiries as to who was the very beautiful girl "who lived with the Grimsdens—the one who sat in the corner of the pew, almost behind Mrs. Grimsden, on Sunday."

This filled up the measure of her rage, and returning home, she proceeded to wreak it upon its unconscious object. After accusing Lettie of falsehood, and meanness, and numerous other vices even less probable, she proceeded so far in her rage as to inflict a blow upon her. Just at this instant the bell rung, its sound reaching her room, and rising even above her voice, which was pitched to its highest key.

There was an instant modulation of the key as she heard the ring, and rushing to the window, she peeped out through the overshadowing vines, to discover who might be here.

"It is a gentleman, Lettie, but you can't answer the bell, with your face all tears. Let Bridget go —no, Bridget has gone out; you must go."

"Perhaps you had better go yourself," answered Lettie, for once thoroughly roused; "no doubt you could put on a beautiful smile for the occasion."

"What do you mean, Miss Impudence?" returned Miss Carrie. "Now, indeed, you *shall* go. Nobody will think of calling you beautiful now. Here, put on this sun-bonnet, and cover your face."

Lettie went and found Lester Hastings standing upon the stoop, tapping his boots with his cane in evident impatience.

"Are the ladies at home?" he inquired. "Ah! I beg your pardon—Miss Grimsden, I believe."

"No, sir—I am Lettie Shaw."

"And I am Lester Hastings. My call is intended for *all* the ladies of the family."

"I will go and see if my aunt and cousins are within. Will you walk into the parlor?"

Carrie had heard the conversation as she leaned over the bannisters above, but she dared not give any other expression of her feelings than a glance and a desperate pinch upon poor Lettie's arm, as she passed her and descended the stairs, while poor Lettie, suppressing the shriek that rose to her lips, went in search of Mrs. Grimsden and Lute.

Ten minutes after, as Lettie sat in her own room occupied with the bitter thoughts that filled her mind, and revolving the half-formed purpose that returned again and again, of leaving her aunt and going out to seek a home and friends somewhere in the strange, wide world, Carrie burst open the door, and entered.

"Put on your best dress and come down, Lettie, Lester Hastings has asked for you, and insists upon seeing you. As you *are* our cousin, though a beggar, and all Chichester knows it, I suppose it won't do to refuse. So come down. There, your hair looks well enough. I'll fasten your dress; I must wait upon 'my beautiful cousin,' I suppose. There, I'm not going to stop any longer, so come along."

Seizing Lettie by the hand, she hurried her down the stairs, and brought her, blushing and confused, into the presence of Lester Hastings. Lettie dared not meet his glance, but her timid courtesy acknowledged his bow, and then she sank tremblingly into the chair he handed her. But few words passed between them then, for Lettie was too greatly confused to trust her voice, and Lester Hastings, well satisfied to have accomplished his purpose, did not attempt to add to her distress by any notice further than politeness required, but conversed gaily with the other ladies, and when he rose to go, his bow included them all.

A stormy scene followed his departure, and after Lettie had been duly, or unduly scolded for what was not in the least her fault, she was sent to her room to lay aside her best dress and don one suited to her employment. Then in family conclave the question whether they should send her away was thoroughly discussed, and it was decided that they could not possibly do without her, but that she must be kept as much out of sight as possible, "or, after all, girls," added Mrs. Grimsden, "she will be married before either of you."

Almost daily, after this auspicious Monday, Lester Hastings might have been seen ringing the Grimsdens' bell, and so whenever he called he insisted upon seeing Miss Shaw, Lettie's frequent appearance in the parlor caused her to make the acquaintance of many of the visitors at the house. Much to the mortification of her cousins, her name was remembered in sending invitations, and soon one for her always accompanied their own. But she was never allowed to accept them, until it was found that Lester Hastings took advantage of her cousins' absence to visit her. Then they took her to parties, to break up, as they said, "this scandalous flirtation."

But all was in vain. Before spring Lester Hastings presented himself one morning to Mrs. Grimsden, armed with a letter from his father, authorizing his suit, and requested her approval and consent to his marriage with Lettie Shaw. The lady trembled with rage, but she was a good dissembler, and so, with a most gentle voice, and a desperate but unsuccessful attempt to weep behind her pocket handkerchief, she signified her approval, and having sent for her niece, put her hand into Lester Hastings's and offered her congratulations.

Carrie and Lute, too, were profuse in their good wishes and happy smiles, when Hastings returned in the evening, and Lettie was generous enough never to tell him how the intervening time had been spent.

At the next commencement Lester Hastings graduated with the highest honors of his class, and, on the following evening, there was a wedding at Mrs. Grimsden's. Lester Hastings was the bridegroom and Lettie Shaw the bride. Colonel Hastings, Lester's stately, white-haired father, gave away the bride, and his mother was the first to kiss her new daughter, when the ceremony was finished.

Next day the Hastings family departed, taking the bride on a round of the watering places, before they finally returned to the South.

This was the first and last wedding at the Grimsden's. Carrie and Lute lived old maids, in spite of all their flirting and fascinations, and, if living still, are yet members of the sisterhood. But the wife of the Hon. Lester Hastings has for several winters created a great sensation in Washington, and lately sailed with her husband, the newly-appointed ambassador to the court of ——, for Europe. The Grimsdens have been noted for years for their profuse mention of "Cousin Lettie, Mrs. Lester Hastings," and display with infinite pride the rich presents she sends them, as evidences of her wealth and high station.

◆

Bloodless Vengeance.—The Greenlanders, says a recent writer, have some peculiar customs; the most singular is their musical combat. If a Greenlander imagines himself affronted by another, he composes a satirical poem, and challenges his adversary to sing. Both appear with a respectable chorus, chiefly women, and the contest of wit begins. He who fairly laughs out his opponent, and gets the last word, gains the applause and wins the day. As a method of revenging insults, is not this as rational as most of those adopted by more civilized nations?

◆

Affections, such as joy, grief, fear, and anger, being, as it were, the sundry fashions and forms of appetite, can neither rise at the conceit of a thing indifferent, nor yet choose but rise at the sight of some things.

THE MAIDEN'S CHOICE.

BY C. W.

A young maid sat by her cottage-tree,
  A beautiful maid, at the dawn of day;
Her sewing fell idle upon her knee—
  For her heart and her thoughts were far away:
When a sober old wooer came up the dell,
  A wooer whose hopes, one would think, were few;
But a maiden's heart is a puzzle to tell—
  And though old his face—yet his coat was new.
Oh, a young maid's heart is a puzzle to tell,—
  And though old his face—yet his coat was new.

The wooer he gave her a wistful look—
  And wistful, too, were the words he said;
While merry she sang, like a summer brook,
  And play'd with her needle, and knotted the thread:
He spoke of the ring and the wedding chime,
  He press'd her hand, and he bended his knee;
And he begg'd and implor'd her to *fix the time!*
  No—go, and ask my mother, said she:
Oh, fix it yourself, my darling, said he—
  No—go, and ask my mother, said she.

Scarce into the house had the wooer gone,
  When a young man leap'd o'er a neighboring stile,
And sad was the look that the youth put on;
  And playful and gay was the maiden's smile:
Pray who is this carle that comes here to woo?
  And why at your side does he talk so free?
Must *I* ask your mother, dear Mary, too?
  No, Harry, she whisper'd—you must ask *me!*
I'd better go in your mother to see?
  No, Harry, no—no! you must kneel, and ask ME.

There was waiting one morn at the village church,
  Waiting, and weeping, and words of woe:—
For the wealthy old wooer was left in the lurch,
  The maid had gone off with a younger beau:
Warmly the sun on the hedgerow glowed,
  Warmly it shone on the old farm gate;
And wild was the laughter upon the road
  As Harry rode off with his wedded mate!
Ha, ha! cried she—Ho, ho! laughed he—
  They may wait a long while ere the bride they see.

◆

MY RHEUMATIC FRIEND.

AN ALPINE ADVENTURE.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Barton had a great time among the Alps. He is of a romantic, adventurous turn, and the wild scenery of Switzerland just suited him. His letters continued to come regularly, and his promise to keep me informed of his movements was religiously kept. From Geneva he crossed the Lake to Villenueva, and thence, by the Rhone, to Sion. Then he came back to Martigny, and thence started to the southward for the great St. Bernard, intending to visit the *Hospice* of the Augustine monks in that celebrated mountain pass, and also to view the place where Charlemagne, Frederic Barbarossa, and Napoleon Bonaparte, and the old Romans before them, crossed with their mighty armies. But before reaching this place, he had an adventure, which is worth transcribing. His letter, giving me an account of it, was dated at the Hospice of St. Bernard, and ran as follows:

"When I got into that scrape in Paris, I think I told you I would steer clear of all such dangers for the future; but a man who is traveling here, and means to examine as he goes, runs the risk of strange encounters. We left Martigny in the forenoon, and, at the distance of ten miles, came to the little village of St. Pierre, which stands at the confluence of the entremont and a brisk mountain stream from the eastward. Though the distance from here to the Hospice of St. Bernard was only seven miles, yet the climb was tedious; so we resolved to wait and get some dinner. After the meal was over—and an abominable one it was, by the way—I strolled out for a walk. In the court I met an old muleteer, who informed me that there were two or three very pretty vineyards on the little mountain stream, and also that I might find some game in the valley. I returned at once to the house; but none of the others would accompany me. They were too tired. So I just made up my mind that I would go alone. Accordingly I took my gun and started off. The whole stream was not more than eight miles long, dashing down from the mountains that flank the Val de Bagnes, and I left my horse to rest, choosing to make the excursion on foot.

"I found the valley wild and romantic enough. On the south the stream washed the very base of the ragged mountain, while to the north swept up a narrow strip of arable land, on which the vines grew luxuriantly. I had gone two miles, or more, without seeing anything to fire at, when I came to a point where the stream had cut its way through a solid mountain spur. Over this I climbed, by a good mule-path, and beyond I saw another plain, partially covered with wood, where goats were feeding. A little further on I saw a path which led to the left, through a lovely wood, and into this I turned; and here I found some game. I shot two large birds, and had just brought down a splendid hare, when a strange sound struck upon my ear. It was like the cry of a person in distress, and seemed to be a little distance ahead. I had heard of animals whose cries were like the human voice, and I wondered if I had one of them here. But upon listening more attentively, I became assured that some fellow creature was really in suffering not far off.

"I bagged the hare, and then hurried forward. I was still in the forest path, which was here quite wide, and in a few moments I came upon the owner of the distressed voice. It was a girl, not more than sixteen years of age, and belonging, apparently, to the poorer class of goatherds. Her face was brown from exposure, and though her features were homely enough, yet there was nothing repulsive in them. Her head and feet were bare, and a mass of brown curls hung loosely over her full shoulders. She was groaning piteously, and holding her right ankle with both her hands.

"'What is the matter?' I asked, in French.

"She seemed to understand me, though she replied in German:

"'Oh, sir—I have hurt me so badly. My ankle is broken, I fear.'

"'But how did you do it?' I returned.

"'I was climbing this tree after blossoms, sir; and I slipped and fell. Oh! oh! oh!'

"'Then I must help you,' I said. 'Where do you live?'

"'Only a little distance from here, sir—right through the wood. I had come out to pick some berries for my poor father, and the foolish blossoms tempted me.'

"'Not very foolish either, for a girl,' said I. But tell me—could you walk, think, by leaning on my arm?'

"'I can try, sir,' she answered, with a grateful look.

"'Then let me help you up.' And thus speaking, I took her carefully by the arm, and helped her to her feet. At first she did not venture to put her right foot to the ground, but finally she let it down, and, leaning heavily upon my arm, she limped along.

"'I think I can walk so, sir,' she said, 'if it will not be too much trouble for you.'

"I assured her that it was no trouble to me. On the contrary, I should feel it as a pleasure, aside from a duty, to help her to her home. She seemed very grateful, and thanked the Virgin Motherd that I had come. She groaned deeply with pain, though I thought, as we progressed, that she moved along more easily. As I noticed this, I asked her if her ankle pained her as much as ever.

"'No, sir,' she replied. 'It seems to be better from the exercise. But I don't live much farther, sir.'

"'You say you live with your father,' I remarked, after a few minutes of silence.

"'Yes, sir. He and I live all alone.'

"'What does he do for a living?'

"'Alas! nothing, kind sir. He is unable to work, or even to walk about. He can't even stand. He is as helpless as a sucking babe.'

"'What is the matter with him?'

"'Rheumatism, sir. He has been sick with it for years; so sick that most of the time I have to feed him. His hands and arms are utterly useless. Alas! it is very hard, sir.'

"'And you are his only support,' I said, in pity.

"'Yes, sir. But it is a pleasure to me. He cared for me when I was helpless, and I should be unkind, indeed, did I refuse now to care for him.'

"The girl really looked pretty now. Her devotion and truth shone through the bronzed skin with a beautifying halo. I was interested in her.

"'There is our humble cot, sir,' she cried, as we emerged into a narrow opening in a sort of mountain gorge. It was a log hut, built in wigwam fashion, and plastered with mud and moss. A few vines were creeping over it, and a cow was feeding at no great distance.

"'You will come in and see my poor father,' she urged.

"'Of course I will,' I replied.

"The interior of the hut was very comfortable, and upon one side, near an open window, sat a man, a little past the middle age, whose arms and legs were drawn up in an awkward shape. His head was large and massive, though exceedingly flat on top; and he must have been a strong man in his day, for his shoulders were broad, and his chest deep and full. His chair was very large and heavy, and sat upon four small wooden trucks, so that his child could wheel him about at pleasure.

"'What is the matter with my darling?' he asked, as his quick eye caught his daughter's limp.

"'Only a fall, papa,' she bravely returned. 'I fell and hurt my ankle, but it is better now. I shall soon have it well. Still I don't know what I should have done if it hadn't been for this kind gentleman. He found me by the roadside, and has helped me home. He has been very good to me, papa.'

"As this naturally turned the father's attention upon myself, we exchanged salutations; but before I entered into any conversation with him I turned to the maiden, and asked her if I could be of any further assistance to her. I told her I was something of a doctor, and could possibly help her. But she assured me there was no need. She said the ankle was already better, and a little swathing would be all that was necessary. With this she limped into a little bedroom in one corner, which was partitioned off with upright poles covered with birch-bark, and I turned my attention to the invalid.

"We spoke of his child, whom he professed to love very much; and then we spoke of the romantic spot in which he had chosen a home. At length I touched upon his sickness, and he informed me that he had been utterly helpless for over six years. His legs and arms were wholly paralyzed, and he could only move from place to place by being dragged in his chair, or carried upon the back of a mule. The man gazed at me sharply as he spoke, and there was something in the light of his greenish eyes almost painful. But this, I thought, was the result of pain.

"My host had just concluded an account of some of the troubles he had experienced, when the quick cry of a bird fell upon my ear. I knew by the sound that some of the feathered tribe had got into a bit of a row. I jumped up and hurried to the little square window by the invalid's chair, and saw a hawk and two smaller birds dodging around over the trees. But this was not all I saw. Something moving along upon the ground, close under the window, attracted my attention, and upon bending my eyes in that direction I saw the girl whom I had helped home gliding by like a squirrel. She was in a stooping posture, and her bare feet moved as readily and freely as ever feet moved! I took a second look as she was disappearing, and I was not mistaken in the person.

"What did this mean? Surely such a lameness could not have departed so quickly. There was a mystery here, and as I stood there by the window I went into it with all my might. My adventure with the body-snatchers at Paris was present to my mind, and it led me at once to think of dangers and deception. That the girl had feigned all her lameness was to me a simple fact, for I knew enough of the human frame to know that such a sprain as she had professed to have, or, for that matter, any sprain at all, could not have been cured so suddenly.

"Now, if the daughter was deceiving me, might not the father be doing the same? All this passed through my mind in a very few seconds, and I resolved to return to my seat and watch the movements of my rheumatic friend. His eyes burned as before, though, I thought, more uneasily. I now kept a sharp eye upon his hands, and was not long in believing that they were as strong and serviceable as my own. They had not that peculiar nervous appearance which always attends a limb long in pain; and the painful twitches were too artful and spasmodic for continuous suffering. I watched the fellow, keeping up a conversation the while, until I was morally certain that he was deceiving me, and then I reflected upon the purpose of it. What could it be but robbery? And would they dare to rob a man until they had first taken his life? Of course not.

"But, after all, I might possibly be mistaken, though the entrance of the girl, limping as painfully as ever, did not help to shake my suspicions. I determined, if possible, to watch the two together without their knowledge.

"'If you will allow my gun to remain here awhile, I should like to take a view from the cliff above your cot,' I said, rising from my seat, and backing politely towards the door.

"'Certainly,' was the response. 'You will not be gone long.'

"I cannot, for I must return to St. Pierre ere long,' I responded.

"I went out, and hurried up the cliff back of the hut, but instead of stopping there, I slipped down through the thick wood, until I had reached a point opposite the open window of the dwelling, where I climbed up into a tree. I had calculated to a charm, for I soon gained a perch from whence I could look directly into the cot, without the danger of being seen in return, the foliage thoroughly screening me.

"Can you guess what I saw? But I was not disappointed, nor yet surprised. I saw my rheumatic friend upon his feet, as straight and strong as a stag! His legs and arms worked nimbly enough, and his daughter was stepping briskly about. They were talking very earnestly, and pretty soon I saw the man take from what seemed to be a locker in the side of the wall a short, heavy club, which he ran down within the bosom of his frock. Then some arrangements were made with the scanty furniture, and after this the fellow sat down in his chair, and the female—interesting creature!—limped and laughed.

"I needed no prophet to tell me the rest of the plot. It was perfectly plain, as was the course I would pursue. I came down from the tree and examined my revolver, and then put it where I could keep my hand upon it without exciting suspicion. I made my way back to the hut over the cliff, and when I entered the man was curled up in his great chair, and Miss Devotion sat upon a low stool rubbing her shin. The chair, however, had been slightly moved, so that the man now sat with his face to the window, a little upon one side of it, and about four feet off. My fowling-piece was in the corner where I left it.

"'The view is charming from that cliff,' I remarked, as I sat down.

"'It must be,' returned my host, 'though it has been long years since I have enjoyed such scenes. Ah, 'tis hard to be shut up like this!'

"I said it must be.

"At this point the affectionate daughter limped to the window and looked out.

"'O!—My soul!' she cried, clasping her hands, 'what a curious animal! O, sir, do come and see!'

"Of course I went and looked; and of course, too, I knew what the movement meant. As I passed the big chair I gave a secret, sidelong glance that way, and saw the hand lifted to the bosom. I reached the window, and made a motion as though I would look out, but I did no such thing. With a quick, strong movement I hurled the girl from me, and turned like lightning upon the man. He was already upon his feet, and the short oaken club, with a ponderous leaden head, was half raised.

"'Drop that, villain!' I shouted, with the muzzle of my pistol in his very face. 'Drop it, or you die upon the spot! I know you!'

"The rascal shrank back, and in a few seconds his club fell to the floor. He trembled from head to foot, and his face looked ghastly. The girl stopped till she saw the club fall, and then she fled from the place.

"'It was only a joke, good sir," the man gasped, trying to look cheerful.

"'I know it,' said I, 'and I am going to carry the joke out. So now lie down upon your belly. Mark you—I have six bullets here, and I could put them all through your body, one after the other, in as many seconds. If you hesitate to move as I tell you, you shall have the whole of them through your head. Now down upon your belly, flat on the floor!'

"'But for what?' he asked, trying to avoid the ugly looking muzzle of my pistol.

"'I'll tell you,' I returned. 'If I leave you free, I fear you may shoot me as I go out.'

"'But I have no gun, sir.'

"'I won't trust you, for I know you lie to me. So down, as I bid you, and when I am gone, your daughter can come and untie you if she will.'

"The fellow saw my determination, and he saw my pistol, and pretty soon he got down upon the floor like a calf. I seized a coil of stout cord which I had seen hanging by the window, and lashed the villain's wrists behind him as firmly as I could. He groaned, and swore, and threatened, but my pistol kept him in due submission.

"'But why tie my legs?' he demanded, as I went at work in that direction.

"'It is my pleasure,' I said. 'You had better have your legs tied than have a bullet through your head. Your interesting daughter can cut the cord, if she cannot untie it.

"I lashed his ankles as firmly as I had his wrists, and feeling quite confident that he had not the power to free himself, I took my gun and left the hut. As I passed out, I saw the girl run around the corner, and, with all my speed, I put after her. I caught her at the edge of the wood, and presented my pistol to her head.

"'O, sir—don't! I wont set him free till you are quietly away!'

"'I don't think you will, my devoted girl, for I mean to take you to Saint Pierre with me. So mind you:—One movement out of the way and pop goes a bullet through your head! I am in no mood for trifling now. I am in a hurry, and you must move quickly. So now jog along—come!'

"She begged and pleaded, but all to no purpose. I had no heart for her wo, and no sympathy for her filial distress; and pretty soon we were in motion. She wept and implored often upon the way, but when she at length found that my heart was not to be touched a second time she became silent and savage, and walked along without further opposition.

"We reached St. Pierre just as my companions, tired of waiting for me, had mounted for St. Bernard; but when they heard my story they conconcluded to wait. We easily found some of the officers of police, and when I had told them of what I had seen and done, they were astonished. Several travelers had been lost in that same gorge, and no clue to their fate had ever been found. The poor *rheumatic* had been visited, and asked for information, but no suspicion had rested upon so seemingly a helpless being.

"The girl was lodged in a place of safety, and then we rode back to the hut, where we found my rheumatic friend just as I had left him, save that he had rolled about the floor some.

"'*Mein Gott!*' exclaimed one of the officers, 'this is the lame man! Ah, old fellow, we've found you, eh?'

"The man protested 'twas all a joke, but no one would believe him; and he was marched back to the village and locked up. That night the girl, who gave her name as Julia Metzen, made a full confession. She was no relation of the man's but he had found her in Sion, where her mother had led a dissolute life. She had been with Robert Mongartz (such was the villian's name) five years, and during that time he had murdered full twenty travelers; and she had decoyed most of them to his hut. But he had not done all this at St. Pierre —he had operated in various other places as well. When he had rifled the bodies of his victims he buried them under great rocks and trees, and did it so carefully that scarcely any trace was left. In short, she gave all the particulars she could remember, and they were horrible enough.

"On the following morning the girl was taken out to the hut by the officers, and the bodies—or remains—of four men were found in spots where Mongartz had buried them. The village was all excitement when I left. The girl, who has evidently been operated upon more by fear of her master than by any desire for crime, is to be sent to an asylum, or penitentiary, of some sort; but Master Robert Mongartz is the property of the hangman, sure.

"Down the mountain for Italy to-morrow; and you may rest assured that I shall look out for all boy-messengers and lame wood-nymphs in future."

◆

Arts that respect the mind were ever reputed nobler than those which serve the body.

TREACHERY.

"How did you learn all this?" asked one person of another, who had been detailing a long history of a third individual's imperfections.

"Oh! you know we two are intimate friends. She tells me all her affairs, and asks me to advise her on all occasions. It wouldn't do to let her know what I've told you. You, of course, understand this; but you seemed to have such an exalted opinion of her, that I thought it would be only fair to let you know that she's no nearer perfection than you and I are."

"I believe you profess to be attached to her, don't you?"

"Oh, yes; why, she believes that I love her better than almost anybody in the world. She can't keep anything secret from me. Why, don't you think I got her to own up upon the whole of that affair just by a little extra show of affectionate interest in her. Edwards, whose interest it was to have her in his power, requested me to try and discover the truth of the matter, and I did so without the least difficulty."

"Then, in reality, you dislike Mrs. ——, do you?"

"Why, bless you! no—not at all. Indeed, I rather like her. She is so unaffectedly kind and generous-hearted, and then she is so delightfully easy to manage. I should be quite lost without her."

"And yet you betrayed her into the hands of one who is at heart, as you well know, her enemy, and have just now been revealing many of her faults to me. May the Lord deliver *me* from such a friend."

Who does not echo that wish? What a detestable spirit is that which leads man or woman to worm into the secret heart of another, only to betray the confidence of which they become possessed.

Yet how many are the creatures in human shape who make it a constant practice thus to play Judas.

A. H.

◆

MAMMON-WORSHIP.

If we were required to designate the present age, we should most decidedly describe it as the golden one, not from its peculiar goodness or simplicity—"save the mark"—but from its overweening love of riches. A covetous desire of wealth, a cringing subserviency to the rich, with, at the same time, an envious hatred of them, are the characteristics of our day. Deny it who can—all ages, ranks, and creeds are distinguishing themselves as mammon-worshipers.

That we should wish to acquire money is natural enough—a legitimate desire productive of great effects; we cannot close our eyes and senses to the enjoyments of wealth, and would ensure them to ourselves and families. But the hope which inspires and animates our efforts eventually becomes a passion, carrying us away in its vortex; its effects are too often crime and shame.

We are now no longer satisfied with the "daily bread" for which we are taught to pray, but, despising the competency within our grasp, peril everything in quest of riches. Headlong speculation, breach of trust, theft, murder, all proceeding from this ill-directed motive. The bead-roll of sin reads badly, but we can justify it even to the very last and irreparable one. And the criminals have not been mere vulgar, uneducated felons, who in their brutal ignorance would steal and kill on the most paltry temptation. The middle and more refined classes are adding to the black catalogue of guilt. The prize aimed at has been proportioned to the deed—money still the instigating motive, the proposed reward.

Men in situations of trust, of great apparent respectability, and certainly possessed of all the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life, have had this maddening craving for riches, and have fallen before it. Gold, gold was still the cry, and then we started in abhorrent surprise as we heard of defalcations, terminating in shameful flight, in the felon's cell, in suicide.

◆

GREETINGS IN VIENNA.

A peculiarity of the Viennese is the multitude of greetings which they use in salutations, whether on the promenade, in the social circles, or in daily intercourse. "I wish that you have had a good dinner," is by far the most usual salutation after dinner, instead of "good afternoon." If they meet you before dinner, an hour or two, the salutation is usually, "I wish you may have a good dinner." This is even common among business men. We have seen gentlemen enter a counting-house, full of clerks, silent and busy at their desks, and excite them all by wishing they may have a good dinner, instead of simply saying, "good morning." In the better circles it is not at all uncommon for the dinner party, the repast being ended, to rise, shake hands all round, and express the wish to each other that no ill effects may be experienced from the dinner. The parting salutation at night is infinitely more expressive than our "good night." The Germans say, "May you sleep well," "A pleasant repose," "Pleasant dreams." Their "good bye" is always a strong farewell: "*Lebehn se wohl*" (May you live well). The gentlemen kiss each other on meeting, as our fair sex do at home; and we have more than once enjoyed a hearty laugh in our sleeve on meeting some fiercely-whiskered and moustached friend, and submitting to his hugs and kisses, and "my dears," before the host of promenaders. During these charming performances, bands of music, stationed at different points, play lively tunes, and altogether we have a lively time.

◆

MARRIAGE MAXIMS.

There is no greater plague to a married woman than when her husband dischargeth on her back all his jars, quarrels, and passions, and reserveth his pleasures, joys, and company for another.

Let men obey the laws, and women their husbands.

Unhappy is that man who marrieth, being in poverty.

Old age and marriage are alike; for we desire them both, and once possessed, then we repent.

Give thy wife no power over thee; for if thou suffer her to-day to tread upon thy foot, she will not stick to-morrow to tread upon thy head.

No man suffereth his wife much, but he is bound to suffer more.

A good wife must be grave abroad, wise at home, patient to suffer, constant to love, friendly to her neighbors, provident for her husband.

Marriage with peace is this world's Paradise; with strife this life's Purgatory.

Silence and patience cause concord between married couples.

A chaste matron, by obeying her husband's will hath rule over him.

The first conjunction of man's society is man and wife.

It is better to marry a quiet fool than a witty scold.

◆

It is through inward health that we enjoy all outward things.

PEACE AND WAR.

BY CARLOS D. STUART.

Lo! the purple morn came stealing
  With the gentle breath of Spring,
O'er the mountains and the valleys,
  Like a bird with golden wing;
And the cottages lay smiling
  'Mid the meadows green and gay—
One might dream 'twere heaven nestled
  In the bosom of the May.

And the cotter early rising,
  Sang his ditty to the sound
Of the brooklet's mellow murmur,
  And the leaves that rustled 'round;
And the maiden held her distaff,
  And the matron twirled her wheel—
One might know that on that valley
  Blessed Peace had set its seal.

But anon, as upward streaming
  Swept the coursers of the sun,
Came a cloud above the mountain,
  With its visage bleak and dun;
And the thunder hoarsely rattled,
  And the lightning, like a chain,
Threw its fold around the valley
  And its blight upon the plain.

And more fierce the tempest hurtled
  As the sun careering went,
And the sky of all its glory
  Seemed bereft as it was rent;
And the cotter ceased his singing,
  And the matron fled her wheel—
One might know that on that valley
  War had set its crimson heel!

A RUN FOR LIFE.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Afar out in the great wilderness of the far West, around their camp fire, sat four mountaineers, one toasting his meat at the fire, one mending his torn moccasins by the flickering light, and the other two squatted upon the ground, quietly smoking their pipes, while their mules and horses stood feeding near. It was a wild, picturesque scene—in a deep valley, near a mountain stream—a lurid light gleaming upon their hard, bronzed features, their rough, mountain costume, their packs and arms, their feeding cattle, the gliding stream, and the rocks and the trees around and above them.

"I say, Bill, old hoss," said one of the two who sat smoking, turning to his nearest companion, "'spose you gin us that thar scrape o' yourn with the Injuns! I'd like to smoke another pipe afore I turns in; and them kind o' things, you know, sarves to float the time along amazing."

"Wall, that thar war one on 'em!" returned Bill, emphatically, taking a long, steady pull at his pipe, and rolling out quite a cloud: "I never had sich a run afore, sence I owned these hyer pegs."

The second speaker, Bill Lukens, was a tall, brawny fellow, some five-and-thirty years of age, with sandy complexion, light-blue eyes, and strongly marked features, who had spent a great portion of his life in the wilderness, as hunter, trapper, and guide; and, like all who are continually exposed to perils, had passed through a great many scenes of adventure, and had had a great many hair-breadth escapes. He had recently joined the present party, to whom he was known by reputation; and having, on more than one occasion, alluded to his "scrape with the Crows," one of his companions had now asked him for the story, to while away the time around their camp fire.

"Wall, crowd her through!" said the first speaker, in reply to Lukens.

"Aye, that's the talk," said the one who was toasting his meat.

"Next to the fun o' being in a scrape," observed the fourth, "is the fun o' telling on't or hearing on't."

"Wall," resumed Bill, "as you're all willing, and me, too, I'll go in. You see, it was just this hyer way:—Me and my pardner, old Fighting Pete—it's like some o' ye knows him?"

"I does that—easy," replied the first speaker, drawing two or three rapid whiffs from his pipe; "I knows the old beaver, jest like a trap. Me and him had a fight once, and I got licked!"

All laughed, and Bill Lukens proceeded.

"Wall, as I was a-saying, old Fighting Pete war my pardner; and me and him war setting our traps, up along the Big Horn, one day, about three or four year ago, when I seed some'at as I didn't like, and I pinted it out to Pete.

"'What does you call that thar, old hoss?' says I.

"'Why, that thar's as plain as shooting,' says Pete. 'That thar's a moccasin print, as had a Injun foot into it, and not many year ago neither. Augh! it's allers the way,' says Pete; 'ef a feller happens to git whar he ken do suthin decent, round comes the bloody red niggers to spile it all. I say, Bill, we'll hev to put out from hyer, and it goes agin me like sand in my eye.'

"'Wall,' says I, 'thar's only one print, anyhow.'

"'As you *see*,' says Pete—'only one print as you *see*—but you arn't sich a confounded fool as to s'pose a Injun walks on one leg, I 'spect?'

"'Wall,' says I, 's'pose he has two legs?—that thar only makes him *one* Injun—and then we're two to one, anyhow.'

"'Augh!' says Pete, drawing himself up amazing, and looking as wise as an owl, 'does you know anything about hens?'

"'Not uncommon,' says I, 'but I've eat 'em to Independence.'

"'Shagh!' says Pete, 'I don't mean that thar, but I means ef you know the principal upon which they works?'

"'Not particular,' says I.

"'Wall, then, I'll tell ye,' says Pete. 'They fust makes a nest, and then they lays a nest-egg, and arter that they lays more.'

"'But,' says I, 'I don't see the pint.'

"'Why, you bat-blind crow,' says Pete, 'the pint is, that this hyer red nigger ar' the nest-egg; and whar you sees a sign o' him, you'll see more soon—for he ain't a egg as'll stay long alone—so it's my opine we'd better gather up our traps and put out from hyer.'

"'Wall,' says I 'I don't know but that's safe advice.'

"'It ar' hoss, sir-ee!' says Pete.

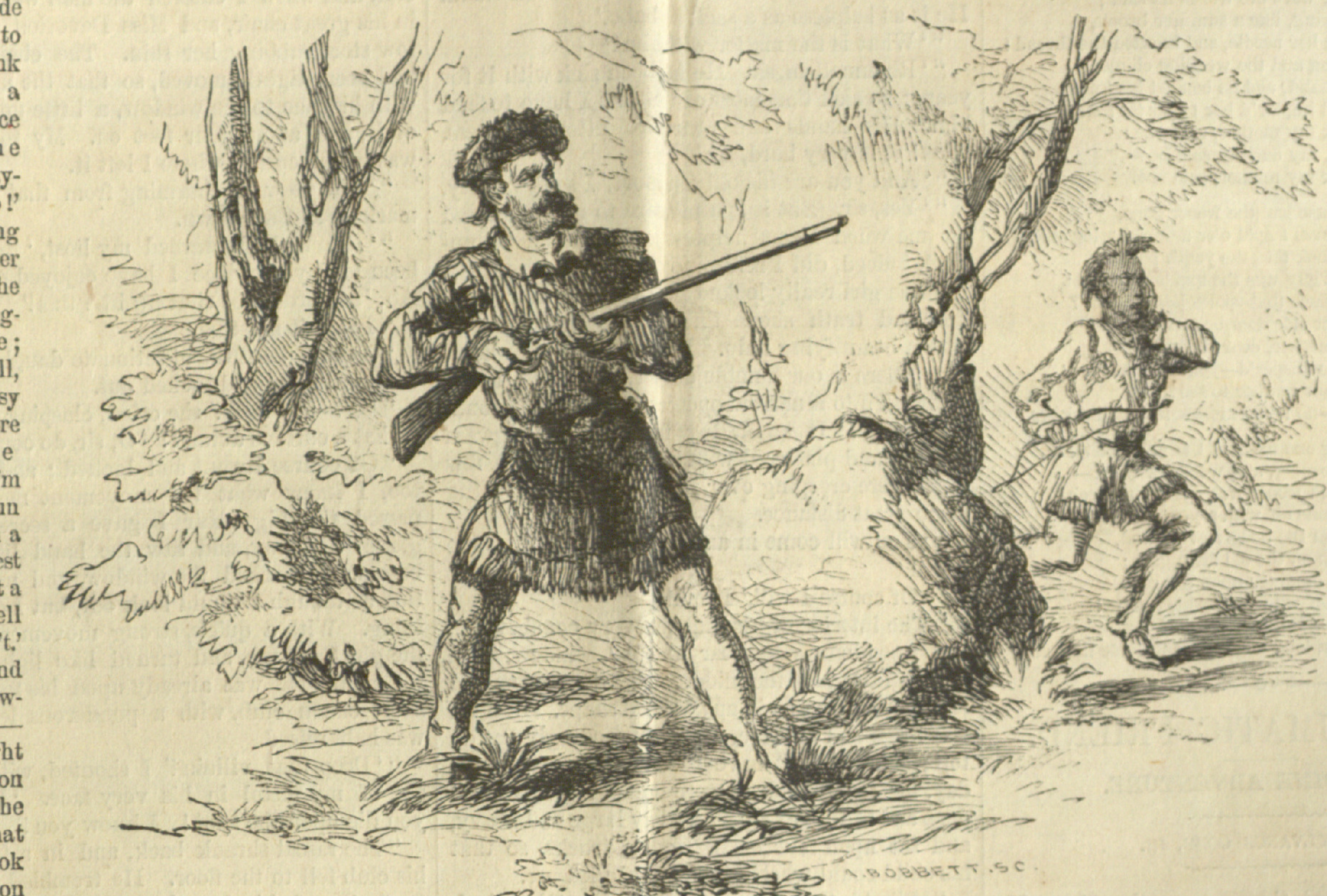
"So we tuk up the traps as we war putting down; and then we went to look arter some we'd sot afore—Pete going up the river, and me down—but both agreeing to meet at a place as we'd named Cedar Bluff.

"Wall, boys, I hadn't gone far down the river, when, jest as I war passing along behind a thicket like, whiz, came two or three arrers—two of 'em so close as to graze the skin, and t'other one sticking into my arm a bit, and followed by some o' them thar yells as all the skunks knows how to do.

"'Hooraw!' thinks I: 'ar' that your game!' and making powerful quick tracks for a near bluff, I turned the corner of a rock, and, looking back, seed three o' the red niggers close arter me, still yelling like mad.

"I didn't know how many thar might be; but I thought as how, ef the forward one war Fighting Pete's nest-egg, I'd make a cold chicken on him sudden. So fotching round my old rifle, I let him hev the nicest part into it—thinking, maybe, ef he'd git more'n he wanted, he'd let the next imp behind him hev a bit, too. And he did—yes, sir-ee! for the ball went plum through him, and into the one behind him; and sich a howling as they all set up together, you never heard.

"Wall, I 'spected now to see t'other hound turn and run, and gin it up straight. But he didn't—nary one—no, *sir*—but come full bent arter me, drawing another arrer to the head, and letting it slide so close as to make me think o' what a preacher once said to me 'bout my prayers. "'Oho!' says I, dodging around another corner o' the rock, and hugging it close; 'ef your'e all, you'll be easy meat, too, afore long; and ef you thinks I'm a gwine to run from *one* sich a red nigger, jest wait till I git a chance to tell you I arn't.'



A. BOBBETT. SC.

"Wall, round he come, blowing amazing—for he thought I'd gone on furder, case the place had that kind o' a look—but I soon tuk the conceit out o' him powerful; for jest as I seed his ugly mug agin, not more'n four feet off, I riz up and lit on to him, like a painter on to a deer; and afore he knowed particular what ailed him, he didn't know nuthing—for I'd got my butcher into him a few, I tell *you!*

"Wall, I ripped off his scalp, and shook it in his face, to show my contempt for the beast; and then, t'aring off his b'ar-skin, and taking his bow and arrers, to help me out, in case thar war any more 'bout, I kicked him down into the water. Then I gin one reg'lar yell for old Wirgin'a, and sot to loading my rifle, all the time keeping my eye peeled, and looking two ways for Sunday.

"Jest as I war ramming down the ball, I heerd a few more low yells, some distance off, and old Pete's rifle crack at the same time. Says I to myself: Pete war right 'bout that thar hen business, and thar'l be a nest-full round here soon, anyhow. Then I wanted to do two things. I wanted to get to Pete, and help him out; and I wanted to get to t'other niggers, and git thar scalps and traps. But I didn't do nyther: fust, bekase I knowed that ef old Pete war to be killed or tuk, it 'ud be over afore I could reach him; and second, bekase thar war some answering yells t'other side o' me, not fur off; and I felt as how, ef I stayed round there long, I mought know a feller, by the name of Bill Lukens, that 'ud want help the wost kind hisself.

"So I primed the old rifle quick as lightning; and taking along the bow and arrers, I plunged into the Big Horn, and made for the bluff on t'other side. I got over thar without ary accident, and crawled up under some bushes, whar I could look back; but when I did look back, I seed some five or six o' the niggers pointing me out; and then, whiz, came another lot o' arrers, along with some o' the darndest yells, and two on 'em stuck into me—one on 'em into my meat-trap, and t'other into my arm.

"One o' the arrers I pulled out, and t'other broke off in. 'But,' says I, 'you infernal old crow niggers, I'll give another o' ye suthin as ye can't pull out; and taking plum sight at the feller with the longest feather, I drapped him amazing. The arrer in me now hurt me oncommon; but it war in the fleshy part o' my arm, and had nothing to do with my running pegs; and so I reckoned the next best thing to do war to use them a bit.

"Wall, I pulled up the bluff as quick and as zig-zag as I could—the infarnal imps all the while blazing away with thar arrers, and howling powerful over thar dead. I got up to the top o' the bluff safe enough; and from thar, about a mile off—or maybe half-a-mile—I could see a big bit o' prairie; and crossing that thar prairie, full bent, war a big crowd more o' the thieving scoundrels. I begun to think it war a gwine to be tight dodging, and broke for the nearest thicket; but jest as I reached it, my ha'r fairly riz—for the yells as burst from it a'most stunned me—and the next breath I found myself surrounded and tuk.

"'Wall,' says I, 'Bill Lukens, your trapping ar' done for. You're wanted for a roasting-piece—'cept your scalp—and that thar'll rattle in some greasy nigger's lodge, to make glory for him and music for his squaw.'

"Not to spin the matter out too long, I'll jest say what they done with me, and how I got cl'ar of 'em. They tuk me down to the prairie as I seed from the bluff; and thar, arter a while, they all met—nigh a hundred on 'em—and thar I had my trial. I couldn't understand much Crow talk; but I made out enough to know that they war a-gwine to hev some fun with me, ayther by way of a burn or a run. I war in hopes it would be a run, but I didn't say so, kase it warn't likely they'd take my advice, anyhow, even ef I talked Crow to 'em with tears in my eyes.

"At last, arter a good deal of palavering, and some grumbling, it war decided as I should make a run for thar fun. But I took a good look at these hyer pegs, and then at thar spindle shanks, and made up my mind, ef they'd keep off thar hosses and be decent, I'd show 'em a run as 'ud be more fun for me nor them.

"Wall, hollering and laughing, kicking and slapping me, and making all sorts of a hullabaloo, which I 'spect they thought war fun, they tuk me way out into the prairie, 'bout five mile from any tree or bush, and thar, arter stripping off all my clothes, and tying my hands behind my back, they made me understand—some'at by words and some'at by signs—that when they gin the big yell I war to run for my life, and every nigger on 'em arter me, and the first one as mought hit me with his tomahawk, war to hev my scalp for pay.

"'Thank you,' says I; 'but if it's all the same to you, you greasy niggers, I'd prefer to keep that thar same scalp my own self.'

"Still, I didn't think I had much chance o' doing it; for how war a naked man, with his hands tied behind his back, and placed in front of a hundred o' the red niggers, to git away from 'em? and then git away to some fort arterwards, afore he'd starve to death; but, anyhow, it war a chance for life, and Bill Lukens and me concluded we'd go in and do our purtiest.

"Purty soon they all stretched themselves out in a long row, way past both sides o'me, and about thirty yard behind, and I noticed as they all put aside all thar weapons 'cept their tomahawks and knives. That thar war some hope to me, and I looked ahead to see the chances. Straight ahead I seed prairie, and nothing else; but off to the right, 'bout five mile, as I said afore, war the hills whar they'd tuk me from.

"Now I knowed them thar hills wor my only chance, but I knowed, too, it 'ud take a long and a fast run forrerd, to cl'ar the hounds so as to double on 'em and shape my course that thar way, and I'd jest got these hyer things all thought over like, when up rose one tremenjus yell, like a young airthquake, and off I bolted like a shot from a gun, and on come the hull yelling pack arter me.

"'Pegs,' says I, 'if you've any respect for Bill Lukins, do your duty now, for ef you gin in, he'll hev his har lifted amazing!'

"And pegs did do thar duty; and sich another run you never seed I put on, and on, and on, as hard as I could tear, and all the time I could hear the yells behind just about as nigh; and I didn't dare to take a look back, for fear some tomahawk would settle me, for I knowed they could throw a few feet with a sarain aim.

"Arter running a good while, and finding myself still alive and kicking, and not hearing the hounds quite so lively like, I jest turned my head a little, and seed as how I'd left all but six fur back, and out o' them thar six, only one or two would be like to gin me any trouble, ef I could hold out the rate I war going.

"I had more hope now, and I did my best, I tell *you.* I strained every narve, and cord, and all the other fixings into me, and kept on for nigh a half hour, doubling so as to git my line towards the nearest wood. When I looked back agin, I seed all had gin in 'cept two, and out o' them thar two, one war a good way behind t'other, so I knowed it war only one, arter all.

"'Oh, ef I only had my hands loose,' says I to myself, 'I'd bet a pound o' bacca yit, that I'd fix that thar varmint;' and so I begun to tug and pull at the thongs, till I thought I'd cut 'em clean into the bone.

"At last they gin way, and I thought that thar war the happiest minute I ever knowed. I hadn't nothing to brag on yit, for I war naked, and without any weapon o' any kind, and the devil behind me had both a knife and a tomahawk, and now seemed to be gaining on me at every step. The nearer I got to the woods, the more I strained every narve to the very wo'st; but all at once the blood began to gush from my nose, and mouth, and ears, and then I knowed ef I couldn't play possum and come the blind over the Injun, I war a gone beaver. So I kind o' turned one eye onto him like, and made believe as I war working harder'n ever, yit all the time slacking up a little so as he mought come up by degrees, and not suspicion me. Twice I seed him lift his tomahawk to throw, and twice I got ready for a dodge; but the hound calkilated he'd got me safe, and thought he might as well hold on to it, and sink it into my brain with a sartin stroke.

"As t'other one had gin out and turned back afore this, thar warn't but one that I could fear now, and I jest made up my mind not to die easy. I found I couldn't reach the wood, and that thar warn't no use o' trying; and so I kept drawing the nigger on like, till he came panting up to within about two foot, and had got his tomahawk raised for the blow; when, fixing myself for a desperate stroke, I wheeled sudden, bent my head down, and struck him with it right in his meat-trap, doubling us both up together. He struck with his tomahawk at the same moment; but being tuk by surprise, he didn't hit me; and grappling him with all the strength I had left, I jerked the weapon away from him; and afore he could help hisself, I sunk it into his brain. As he fell back, wildly feeling about for his knife like, I drawed myself back, and keeled over on the 'arth, a'most as dead as him.

"Wall, I laid thar till I'd got rested some; and then I stripped off his b'ar skin, and wrapped it round myself, and tuk his scalp-knife and tomahawk, and crawled off into the woods, whar I slept over night. The next day I made tracks for the nearest fort, feeding on roots and berries all the way, and gitting in thar at last quite a starved-looking human. Thar I found Fighting Pete, the old hoss, who'd got away from the varmints with less trouble, and had told 'em all as how I war 'rubbed out.'

"But I warn't!" concluded Bill Lukens, knocking the ashes from his pipe: "no, sir-ee! And now, boys, as you've got my story, let's turn in, for we've got a heap o' tramping to do 'arly to-morrow."

* * *

Fixing our Thoughts on the Future.—All the great and good of the earth have given us examples of their cultivation of this faculty. It is, indeed, at the foundation of greatness of mind, which consists in acting with great views, from great motives, to accomplish great purposes. No one who cannot lift himself out of the present, and realize, or rather live, in the future, is capable of such feeling or action, and often, indeed, he must fail in performing the commonest duties of life.

* * *

Practice flows from principle; for as a man thinks, so will he act.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

☞ *All the back numbers of the* Ledger, *from June 7th, 1856, up to the present date, can be had at our office, in quantities or by the single copy.*

Sorrowful.—You should never have set yourself, or permitted yourself to be arrayed, in opposition to your parents. In the first place, filial obedience is a duty you owe to your parents, to society, to religion, and to your Maker. The original matter of difference was not worth a single ill-natured word, and certainly not one pang of regret. As the case now stands, you should apologize to your father and mother, confess your faults and your folly, and ask their forgiveness. They will of course be glad to forgive you, and then peace and happiness will be restored to your now melancholy and miserable family circle.

Samuel.—You had better keep your money under your own control. When a man parts with the control of his money in society, he is somewhat like a traveler who parts with his weapons in a country infested by thieves and robbers.

Erasmus.—You should be governed in your love affairs by common sense and unyielding integrity; they are the only things which will carry you safe through.

Cuba.—You are a silly set all round, and it will make no difference what you do or what you don't do.

Lilly.—No. We can supply back numbers of the Ledger only so far back as June 7th, 1856.

Lillian.—If you are apprehensive that your lover cares more for your fortune than for yourself, you should be in no haste to marry him, and with the assistance of your friends you can after a time get up some plot to test the matter.

Ephraim.—Yes. The magnet or loadstone is an oxygen of a peculiar character, found occasionally in beds of iron ore. The color varies in different specimens, but is usually of a dark-gray hue, and has a dull metallic lustre. It was first discovered in Magnesia, Asia, hence the name magnet. It is not peculiar to any one particular portion of the world. It is found in considerable quantities in the iron mines of Sweden and Norway, in the Isle of Elba, in different parts of Arabia, China, Siam, in the Philippine Islands, and in North America. Though commonly met with in irregular masses, only a few inches in diameter, yet it is sometimes found of much larger size. One carried from Moscow to London several years since, weighed one hundred and twenty-five pounds, and supported more than two hundred pounds of iron. Artificial magnets are also in general use, which are so constructed as to have a greater intensity of attractive power than the natural ones. It has also been found that meteoric stones possess a strong magnetic virtue, resembling the loadstone of the earth.

Old Fed.—We hope there will never be any "titles of nobility" in this country. We can contemplate such an idea only with feelings of the strongest aversion. Owing to these "titles of nobility" of which you are so desperately enamored, there are a set of men in all the States of Europe who assume, from their infancy, a pre-eminence independent of their talents and their moral character. The attention paid them from their earliest consciousness, gives them the idea that they are formed for command; they soon learn to distinguish themselves as a distinct species, and being secure of a certain rank and station, take no pains to make themselves worthy of it. To this fact the European nations owe much of their sufferings from bad government, aristocratic tyranny, and other wrongs that Americans would not endure for a year without revolution. Save us from "titles of nobility."

P. D. R.—Fudge! You only show your own verdancy by contending that there never was a woman so bad as "Lady Boothroyd" is depicted to be. Did you never read the Bible or general history? Have you never heard of Jezebel, of Lucretia Borgia, or the scores of women who in modern times have poisoned or murdered their husbands, parents, children, or friends? How long is it since a certain woman of this city appalled the whole country by her crimes? Your mother should take care to keep such an unsophisticated youth close to the maternal residence. There have never yet been imaginary characters depicted in fiction either so good or so bad as are constantly found in actual life.

B. A. N.—You are responsible for your friend's debt of $250, as you gave the promise in writing; but for the $1,367 62, you are not legally bound, as you only gave a verbal promise to pay it if he did not. You are morally responsible for it, however, and if you are an *honest man* you will pay it. We will here say for the benefit of our readers generally, that in this State, and in most of the States of the Union, a *verbal* promise to pay or be responsible for another's debt exceeding fifty dollars, is not legally binding upon the party making it, unless he actually pays some portion of the amount at the time the promise is given, or at some other time in such manner as to connect the payment with the obligation he has assumed.

"John Bull."—This national appellation of an Englishman cannot be traced beyond Queen Anne's time, when an ingenious satire entitled "John Bull" was written by the celebrated Dr. Arbuthnot, the friend of Swift, the object of which was to throw ridicule on the politics of the Spanish succession. In the plot, John Bull is the Englishman, and the frog is the Dutchman, and Charles II. of Spain and Louis XV. are called Lord Strutt and Louis Baboon. This satire was exceedingly popular, and gave the Englishman the familiar and sturdy appellation of John Bull, of which he feels so proud.

Elmira.—If you do not and believe you cannot love the young lady, it would of course be unwise to marry her; but inasmuch as you engaged yourself to her, and the engagement is known, you must defer to her wishes in regard to the making known of its discontinuance. A marriage engagement is too important a matter, and too solemn an obligation, to be entered into heedlessly or repudiated lightly; and he who trifles with such sacred things should be made to pay a heavy penalty.

Frank.—The fact that a man is engaged to a lady who is absent does not preclude him from mingling with society and partaking of all proper social enjoyments; and the same rule holds good as to women who are similarly situated. In such matters the *true-hearted* never go astray; it is only the faithless and the fickle who get into difficulties in regard to them.

Foreign Clerk.—We sympathize with your unpleasant position, but know no way of aiding you. Have you offered to work for enough to pay your board? If not, you had better do so, until the times get better. A person possessing such accomplishments as you claim would be sure of good wages as soon as he should become known to a few first class importers.

Frank Boston.—You of course have a right to marry a girl who lies in bed till ten o'clock every morning and is "almost too lazy to breathe." It is a mere question of prudence which you must determine for yourself. We can only say that we think you would be a fool to marry such an indolent and selfish creature.

Louis.—If you have not the courage and address to make the acquaintance of such girls as you wish to know, we can not help you to do so. What are you afraid of? The girls will not hurt you; on the contrary, they will welcome you among them with the greatest kindness and cordiality. Go ahead.

T. D.—We know nothing about the lotteries to which you refer. We cannot give specific advice in such matters, but can only say that, as a general rule, one should not send his money to parties who offer "prizes," unless he wishes to be cheated. They are almost invariably swindlers—and swindlers of the most infamous kind.

C. L.—Daniel Webster wrote "what is called the Hulseman letter." The Chevalier Hulseman was the Austrian Minister to this country at the time Martin Kosta was seized by the Austrian Government and rescued by Captain Ingraham.

Miss J.—You should acquaint your mother or your father with the circumstances, and, if he or she approves of your doing so, answer the letter as your feelings shall dictate.

Moustachios.—We know nothing about the stuff to which you refer for promoting the growth of hair. You would do better to turn your attention to the cultivation of brains.

J. S. S.—It was optional with you to volunteer to accompany the two ladies home or to stay and finish your visit with the third. There was no *obligation* in either case.

Independent.—Your "independence" is based on a shallow and weak foundation. When a young man is fond of sneering at the Bible, it is a sufficient proof of his ignorance and self-conceit. Your good old father, who, you say, "never had but twenty days' schooling in his life," is much wiser than you are, notwithstanding your degree of A. M. He is right in maintaining that "the Bible is the greatest book in the world." This is true, aside from the question of its inspiration. Taken simply as the product of uninspired men, the Bible soars infinitely above any other book. David, Isaiah, and the author of the Book of Job, have written sublimer, sweeter, and more beautiful things than ever fell from the lips or pens of other poets; as a historian and law-giver Moses yet stands unrivaled; and for practical wisdom and terseness of expression, Solomon exceeds any other writer of whom the world has taken note.

A Circle of Ledger Readers.—The "old uncle" is right, and you young folks are wrong. Your error is probably owing to the fact that you are not aware that the word "discover" was formerly used in many cases in which we now always use the word "exhibit." Thus, the old writers would say, "In his speech the eloquent orator *discovered* much wit and great logical power," whereas we say he "*exhibited* great logical power," &c. In speaking of a lady, Addison says she "*discovered* great charms, both of mind and person." Now-a-days we chiefly use the word "discover" in the sense of *to find, to detect*, &c. As to the other matter—the difference between discovery and invention it is this: we *discover* what already exists but is hidden from man's knowledge or observation; but an invention is the producing of what did not before have an existence.

J. R. D. says there is a dispute going on in Stewartsville as to the hight to which the waves of the sea rise during violent storms; some maintaining that they rise two hundred and even five hundred feet, whereas he holds that they cannot, under any circumstances, rise to a greater hight than sixty feet; and he wants to know who is right. We have not the presumption to say just how high the highest wave ever heaved by the ocean was, or how high the highest future ones will be; but we see no reason for limiting their hight to just sixty feet. We think it possible that a wave might reach the hight of sixty feet and six inches. Besides, we are constantly reading of waves "mountain high," and sixty feet would be a "poor show" for a mountain—it would not be a respectable hillock.

Inquirer wants to know "if an error in the grammatical construction of a sentence can be correctly called a *grammatical* error? Is it not a contradiction of terms? Custom sanctions the expression, although, strictly speaking, it may not be correct. Good writers use it, and so do they say a "historical error," etc., instead of an "error of grammar," an "error of history," etc. But as grammar is divided into four parts, namely, orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody, the use of the generic derivative "grammatical" is rather indefinite, as a "grammatical" error, or an error of grammar, might be an error in any of the four departments of grammar. It is better, therefore, to say an error of syntax, an error of orthography, etc., so one may know what the error really is.

Ex-Governor.—We should be glad to accommodate you, but we cannot vary from our regular, published terms. We do not, and will not, under any circumstances, put anybody's name on our books unless his subscription is paid in advance, or unless we send the Ledger to a party gratuitously. Nor will we "cheapen" the Ledger to parties who "could send us the names of a great many subscribers." We do not want subscribers unless they are willing to pay our regular prices—$2 for a single copy, and $3 for two copies, with one copy extra to a person who sends us the names of eight subscribers and $12, all at once. Beyond this we will not go, how many subscriptions soever you may send us.

Arthur sends us a solution of the arithmetical problem given by "Julius" in the Ledger of February 13th. The problem was—

If to my age there added be
One-half, one-third, and three times three,
Six score and ten the sum will be;
What is my age? Pray tell it me.

The answer is sixty-six. And if to that number you add one-half, which is thirty-three, and one-third which is twenty-two, and three times three, the sum will be one hundred and thirty, or six score and ten.

Apprentice.—Your master has no right to treat you so brutally, and you can have him dealt with by the law for it. Nor can he compel you to work on the Sabbath. State the whole case to the clergyman who has shown so much interest in your welfare, and he will doubtless see that you are protected from the miserable brute who is your present master. The moment the latter found you had such an influential friend as the clergyman, and that there was a probability of his cruel conduct being exposed and himself brought under the restraining and regulating arm of the law, he would cease his persecutions.

Indecision.—There would be no harm in your accepting a birth-day present from the young gentleman, inasmuch as your parents have sufficient confidence in him to receive him into intimate association with their family. Such gifts should be simply and frankly accepted as tokens of friendly regard, without forced or far-fetched constructions of the giver's motives. It is a most unpleasant business always to be searching, suspecting, and questioning the motives of one's friends, as a detective policeman does those of a suspicious character.

Johnson.—If you can secure a collegiate education you had better do so. The more knowledge a man can gain the better. And as you have learned the value of education, you would not be apt to trifle away the time spent in college, but would make it tell to the best advantage. The sneers at "college education" which are so common among a certain class, should not be permitted to affect you. When a student does not develop into a good scholar, it is his own personal fault, and not the fault of the institution whose advantages he has failed to improve.

Eugenie.—We are inclined to the opinion that the attire now worn by men and women of good taste is the most becoming that has ever adorned the human race. We certainly cannot recall any fashions, nor have we ever seen drawings of any, which were so graceful and satisfying as those which now prevail among moderate and cultivated people of both sexes. We improve in our fashions, on the whole, as well as in other things, though of course some parties always contrive to make themselves appear ridiculous.

Ruth.—Such a slight difference in the ages of lovers as you mention, is no reason why they should not marry. As a general rule, it is better that the husband should be older than the wife; but where a couple really love each other devotedly, and are congenial in their natures, the fact that the lady is a little older than the gentleman should not be considered an insuperable barrier to their union.

Novice.—We never attend balls, and are not *practically* familiar with the etiquette and manœuvers of the ball-room; but when a gentleman is not acquainted with any of the ladies present, and wants to obtain a partner in the dance, we think he should apply to one of the managers, who could introduce him to as many of the divinities present as he might wish to know.

Palaver.—We are afraid you are too fond of "palavering." You probably lost your client's case by too free an indulgence in this, your favorite luxury. The judge behaved properly, according to your own version of the affair. You should always know how far to go and when to stop, and always remember that the law is not administered, and that society does not exist, exclusively for your own benefit and convenience.

Father-in-Law.—Of course, children should not be "too much indulged;" but who is to decide as to the amount of indulgence that would be proper? According to your account of the matter, you are too strict in your views of family government, and your daughter-in-law is too indulgent. The true course lies between the two extremes.

Young Doctor.—Of course you should pay up all your debts before leaving your native place for a permanent residence elsewhere. Promptness in payment of debts is one of the cardinal virtues, and the young man who is negligent in regard to such matters need never hope for great success in anything.

X. X.—You cannot reclaim the horse. Your chattel mortgage, not being on record according to law, was and is inoperative and void against third parties. The next time you lend money on such a mortgage, have it recorded as soon as possible, and trust to no man's promise "to consider it the same as recorded." That is sheer nonsense.

Oldest Inhabitant.—We believe that the most notable fall of snow, in this State, on record, occured in the winter of 1806—7. In April of 1807, after much mild weather, the snow in Chenango and adjacent counties was six feet deep on a level.

An Unhappy Lover, Chicago.—You should inform the young lady of the injurious charges that have been made against her character, and give her an opportunity for explanation and exculpation. They may be all false. Bring her and her accusers face to face.

Nelly.—Your school-mistress is mistaken. Victoria is Queen in her own right, and her reign will not terminate when the Prince of Wales reaches his majority. She will continue Queen until her death, unless she should choose to abdicate in favor of the Prince of Wales.

James B. T.—It is not our fault that the mails miscarry. We mail the Ledger with exceeding care and punctuality, and if any number of it does not come to hand, the fault is in the management of Uncle Sam's business, not ours.

Rebel.—You should at once return home and ask your father's forgiveness. You will never be happy until you are reconciled to him.

Mary.—We believe that an unmarried woman over thirty years of age is called an old maid.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*